

A TRUMPET

Blown in *Sion*, sounding an Alarm

IN

GODS HOLY MOUNTAIN:

OR,

A Voice lifted up as a TRUMPET,
Crying aloud, and not sparing;

To shew the Lords People their Transgressions,
and the House of *Jacob* their Sins.

By a poor Worm, that through the Lords great Grace, hath found great Blessings among the *Presbyterian Ministry*, and by conversing with some of the Lords Upright Ones of the *Presbyterian Way*; and also choice Blessings among the *Ministry of the Independant and Baptized Congregations*, and some of the Faithful with them.


Micah 3.5,6,8. Thus saith the Lord concerning the Prophets that make my People erre, — Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a Vision. — But truly I am full of Power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of Judgement, and of Might, to declare unto *Jacob* his Transgression, and to *Israel* his Sin.

Isa. 58. 1. Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet, and shew my People their Transgression, and the House of *Jacob* their Sins.

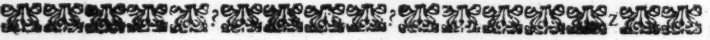
Jer. 4. 14. O *Jerusalem*, wash thine Heart from Wickedness, that thou mayest be saved.

L O N D O N :

Printed in the year 1666.



THe Reader is desired, before he read any part of the ensuing Discourse, to take notice, That there is nothing at all said in this Book, that justifies either the People called *Quakers*, or any others, in any of their Errors in Judgement : But the drift of the whole is to shew all the several Understandings, those Evils that are among them, that are against their own Knowledge, Light, and Understandings. See pages 40, 41, 51, 52, 64, 67, 68, 69. to this purpose.





To the Reader.



*I*s more then probable that this insuing Discourse will meet with great oppositions, and that the powers of Hell and darknes will muster their Forces against it ; not so much by stirring up the Enemies of the Lords People to oppose it, for the Devil knows that their appearing against it, will be no impediment to the virtue and efficacie of it, to the blessed ends proposed in it. But it may be by stirring up those that are accounted Honourable and Devout, to speak despisingly and slightly of it, and to pick out something or other to carp at, and thereby think to cast dirt upon the whole, being fretted that such a work as this should come abroad into the World, that should discover the exceeding sinfulness of Sin in such as they. But though there should be some such, (though possible not many) but the most covetous Person is the most likely.

Act. 13
45.

Yet I am very sure of this, that unto very many, yea most of the Lords People of all distinctions, that have true Faith in God, and in Jesus Christ our Lord, this Discourse will be like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver ; to whom it will come as sweet showers of Rain unto the dry ground, as refreshing Waters to a thirsty Traveller ; who will lay it up in their Bosoms as a Jewel of great value, who will say it is a precious Balm, and an excellent Oyl ; who will bless the God of Israel for it, and the sharpest part of it will be to them the sweetest. And it will not be to them as many other Books have been, that once reading over hath sufficed them, and so to lay them by as of no more use ; but it shall be so savory to them, as when they have once tasted it, they shall be often chewing upon it with pleasure ; not for the curiosity of the Stile, nor for the humane Learning that is in it, for that sort of beauty is not in it ; but for the seasonableness of the Discourse, being what the poor Saints of God

Prov.
25. 11.

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now most stand in need of; so as it will be said, There is nothing more needful now, then Discourses of this Nature; and for the plainness and downrightness, and impartiality of it, striking at that in all sorts of Professors, that stands in the way of true Peace and Solace to the Lords People; even at those grieving Bryars, and pricking Thorns that grieve the Soul, and pierce the inward man: for it is not outward Enemies that are grievous to Saints, unless to their flesh, but they do them more good then hurt, and make more for their inward peace then if they had prosperity without; but it is Sin that is the make-bate between Christ and their Soul, it is their Iniquities that have separated between them and their God, and they have hid his face from them; and that makes outward troubles unease and unpleasant to them. But when they shall be purged from Sin, they shall glorifie the Lord in the Fires; even the Name of the Lord God of Israel in these Isles of the Sea, although the Earth may be moved, and though the Mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea; though the Waters thereof roar and be troubled, and the Mountains shake with the swelling thereof, yet will they not fear.

Isa. 24. 14

15.

Isa. 46.

2, 3.

Zeph. 3.

9, 12.

Rom. 11.

26.

Mal. 3. 1.

2, 3, 4.

Isa. 62. 6.

There are at this day many thousands of true hearted Nathaniels, true Israelites indeed, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, that are daily praying more earnestly for holiness, then for outward ease; for deliverance from the Enemies within their own Souls, then from the Enemies without. That the Lords Name may be sanctified, and glorified in the holy Conversations of his People, rather then that his People may be put into a posture of outward glory; that desire that a pure Language may be turned to his People, though he leave them an afflicted and poor People, trusting in the Name of the Lord; and that fervently pray day and night, that the Deliverer may come to Sion, that may turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and that the Lord whom they seek may suddenly come to his Temple; even the Messenger of the Covenant whom they delight in, may come; and be like a Refiners Fire, and like Fullers Sope; and may sit as a Refiner and Purifier of Silver, and purifie the Sons of Levi; even all his own Inheritance, and may purge them as Gold and Silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an Offering in Righteousnesse, that the Offerings of Judah & of Jerusalem may be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the dayes of old, and as in former years. And these which thus pray, are the Lords Watchmen, which are upon the Walls of Jerusalem, which shall not hold their peace day nor night; even them that make mention of the Name of the Lord, and keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the Earth;

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Earth ; even until the Righteousness of Sion go forth as brightness ; until true Holiness shine so conspicuously in Sion , as men may have cause to say of Sion , The Lord bleſs thee , O Habitation of Juſtice , and Mountain of Holineſs , Jer. 31. 23. For this is that which will make Sion to become indeed the praiſe of the whole Earth , when true Holineſs , and Spiritual beauty ſhall appear in it ; when it ſhall be arrayed in the Robes of Righteouſneſs , and cloathed with Humility , that ſhining beautiful Rayment , and be adorned with the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit ; and be beautified with the exceeding precious Jewels of Faith and Love ; when their Faith in God ſhall be ſuch , as they ſhall not fear what all the united Forces of men or of Devils can do againſt them ; and their love ſuch to God , to his People , and to mankind in general , as it ſhall be the delight of their Souls to do Service to God , and to do good in all reſpects to mankind in general , as far as lies in them. And when this ſpiritual Beauty appears on Sion , then it ſhall be the praiſe of the whole Earth ; then men ſhall praiſe it , and glorifie the God of Iſrael , whoſe Children they are. And without this , though Sion ſhould have full deliverance from all outward Enemies , and though it ſhould have all the outward proſperity that heart could wiſh ; inſtead of being a praiſe in the Earth , and an honour to the Lord , it might become a ſtink in his Noſtrils , and a ſtain , a blot , and a diſhonour to his moſt Glorious and moſt Bleſſed Name.

But all thoſe that wait for Redemption from ſin in Jeruſalem , and that pray and long for the true glory of Sion , that it may truly be a praiſe in the Earth ; they will rejoyce more in any work that hath any tendency to the diſcovery of the ſtumbling-blocks hereunto , and to the taking them out of the way , then if any one ſhould give unto them thouſands of Gold and Silver ; it will make their hearts leap for joy.

But I muſt tell the courteous Reader by the way , That my prayer hath long been , That God would call forth ſome better inſtrument to this Service that he hath appointed me to ; and give a greater measure of anointing to ſome excellent One of his , that is in this Earth , that might do it to greater advantage ; and ſo it had been done by any other , it may be I had been altogether ſilent. But none yet appearing , behold a Babe muſt do it ; it may be to provoke others , who yet have fuller meaſures of the Holy Oyl to pour out to this purpoſe ; for if this incifſion be not deep enough , and if this Potion do not thorowly ſtir all the Humours , which yet it aims at (this being but an Eſſay) it may be a ſecond , third , or fourth attempt of ſome one or more , that may be greatly replenished
with

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Isa. 57. 14.
Mat. 13.
41.

with a large Portion of the Holy Spirit, that may convince of sin, and be a word of Power, through the concurrence of the Spirit, to draw forth bitter mournings in the Lords People over all their Iniquities, may effectually prevail to cast all the stumbling blocks out of the way of his People, and to remove every thing that offends.

But if any of the Lords People shall after all that is or may be done in order hereunto, hug their lusts as their beloved Delilahs in their Bosoms, and roll them as sweet Morsels under their Tongues; the Souls of many will mourn in secret for their pride. But that be far from any. But as I said before, so I doubt not, but am very sure of this, there are many thousands in these three Nations that are true hearted Nathaniels, that will not be offended, but well-pleased with the convincing, charging, and reproving part of this Discourse; even so well satisfied, as they will say as Peter said to his dear Lord in another case, Lord, not my feet onely, but my hands, and my head also. So will they say to the God of Israel. Lord let not this Work, or any other that may follow it, onely tend to discover the Evils of the Paths of our feet, and to turn us from them; but also convince us of, and turn us from all the Errors and Evils of our heads, and hearts also, and of our whole man; we would be all over fair and beautiful, and have no spot in us. And they will say, they are not herein too harshly dealt with, but rather say the harshest word is the most acceptable word to them.

The whole scope of this Discourse is to do that work that must be done, before the approaching glory can be expected, viz. to prepare the Way of the Lord in the Wilderness, and to make streight in the Desert a highway for our God: And when that is done, the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, as is plain, Isa. 40. 3, 4, 5. The Lords Sion hath a long time been, and is at present in a Wilderness Desert state: A Wilderness, a Desert, is a rough unheaven unpollished thing, no beauty, no comeliness is in it. There are no pleasant Walks, no plain and streight Paths drawn by a line in a Wilderness, but rough crooked places, Hills, and Vallies, altogether unpleasant; little fruit grows there but poor dry beathy shrubs that are of little use. And thus it is and hath a long time been with Sion, with the Lords own People, they have been very barren and unfruitful, and like the dry and parched ground; they have dead hearts, unprofitable and unfruitful lives and conversations, in comparison of what they should be; little verdure, little greenness appears in them, but they are like the beathy shrubs of the Desert places: They have not plain & streight Paths among them

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them, but have crooked Spirits, and walk in crooked Paths. But though this is Sions sad case at this day, yet there are glorious Promises made to it, as Isa. 51. 3. The Lord shall comfort Sion, he will comfort all her waste places; though she is unfruitful and waste, yet she shall not be forgotten; but the Lord will comfort her, and how? by making her Wilderness like Eden; And he will make her Wilderness like Eden: though she is an unfruitful Wilderness, yet she shall be as fruitful as ever Eden was; even as the Garden of the Lord, and when she is so fruitful, she shall be comforted indeed, then Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of Melody. This is a very great and precious promise; the like is Isa. 35. 1, 2. The Wilderness, and the solitary place shall be glad for them, (viz. the judgements of God upon Babylon) and the Desert shall rejoyce (Sion, though a Desert, shall rejoyce) and blossom as the Rose, it shall blossom abundantly, (not a few thin blossoms, but abundantly) and rejoyce with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it; the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, (no place more excelling in glory for fruitfulness then it shall be) they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. So that it is plain, that though Sion be a Wilderness, yet it shall become a most lovely, pleasant, glorious, and beautiful place. But it is as plain, that in order hereunto, there must be a cry made in the Wilderness, that must have a tendency to prepare the way of the Lord, and to make his Paths strait, (Isa. 40. 2, 3.) to exalt the Valleys, and to make low the Mountains and Hills; to make the crooked Strait, and the rough places plain, that the way of the Lord may be prepared.

But as yet, although the Judgements, the dreadful judgements of the Lord have come upon the People in these three Nations, one upon the back of another, and his anger is not yet turned away, but his hand is stretched out still, yet there is no appearance of his Peoples making preparation for him, there is not yet a turning to him that smiteth them; they do not put away the evil of their doings from before his eyes, and cease to do evil, and learn to do well; but they seem to be so far from it, as they are not come to any sence of any of the Evils they have done, to provoke him to do all that he hath done; but they go on in their provocations of him more and more, and are in the same sinful posture now, that they were in seven years agoe; as if they were altogether blind, and did not see the causes for which he first turned the Wheel upon them, nor because of which his anger is not yet turned away, but his hand is stretched

*Isa. 7. 13.
17.*

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stretched out still ; but they are directly, and exactly in the posture of that people mentioned, Jer. 8. 9. Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidn back by a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. I hearkened and heard, but they speak not aright ; no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? Every one turned to his course, as the Horse rusheth into the Battel.

*There hath been a grievous back-sliding from the Lord, by his People in these Nations, into many Evils, and (how lamentable is it!) it seems to be perpetual, to be more and more provoking the Lord to his verry Face ; and God having striken and smitten them, now is hearkening for their repentance, and for their speaking right words, and confessing their Iniquities, and justifying him in his Righteous Judgements ; but instead hereof, it may be truly said, That no man repenteth him of his wickedness ; no man speaketh right words in giving glory to God ; no, but men are so far from so doing, as they do not so much as say, What have I done? as if they had not so much as a thought that they had done anything to procure all these dreadful Judgements. No man thinks the cause is in himself ; no man says, What have I done to procure all these heavy Judgements? What cause is there in me? Or O that I knew what particular sin or sins in me, in particular, are the causes of these things! And oh that I might obtain strength from on high to turn from them! But every * one plods on in the same Evils still, that he or she hath done. And this may be made manifest by the discoveries that are made of the temper and posture of their Spirits, in all their Meetings generally ; there is usually a great complaining of their Sufferings, and many cries put up for deliverance ; and great lamentations over their desolations and distresses ; and they roar all like Bears, and mourn sore like Doves, because they have long looked for deliverance, but there is none ; for Salvation, but it is far from them.*

But there is little acknowledging the causes of all these things ; there is little or no sence of them appears in their Spirits : It is true, they will in general acknowledge, that they are Sinners, (and so will the worst of men do) but they rarely make acknowledgements of the particular Sins of which they generally are most deeply guilty. And though some are more excessively guilty of some sins (and others of others) then some others of them are, yet most of them are exceeding guilty of some particular Evils or other, of the Evils herein declared to them. I say in their Meetings together to Worship the Lord, they do not come with any

* I mean the generality, though one here and there is not so. Isa. 69. 11.

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any sence of them at all, many times, having not so much as a thought of them, by any thing that appears in their words or actions; but as if they were altogether blind, and saw nothing of evil in themselves; they come before the Lord without any shame or blushing for their sins in particular, or any sence of his indignation against them for those Evils; and consequently are far from Repentance, and from turning from them; for they are strangers to the first step of Repentance. I considered my wayes, saith David, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies, Psal. 119. 59.

But they do not so much as consider their wayes, nor say, What have I done? And without this, How can they be sensible of the evil of their wayes? And if they have no sence of the evil of their wayes, How can they be ashamed of them? How can they be grieved and broken in heart because of them? How can they bewail and lament their unworthiness, and vileness, in rejecting the Word of the Lord, even the blessed Precepts and Instructions of the Lord, and casting them behind their back, to fulfil the lusts of their flesh? And if they do not lament sore, and mourn over their unworthy, wretched, base dispositions of Spirit, How can they repent of them, and turn from them, confess and forsake them, loathing themselves because of them, abhorring themselves in Dust and Ashes?

But for the most part, they are not come to this step, to say, What have I done? They are not yet come to consider their wayes.

But not doubting but that when many of them read these high charges that are brought against them, they will be so far from stumbling at it, or being offended, as they will rather say, Good Lord, if this be my Case indeed, that though I think I have considered my wayes, yet indeed I have not considered them as I ought; be pleased to help me to come to this step in Truth, and in sincerity, and in good earnest, to search and inquire, and say, What have I done? Even I, What have I in particular done to provoke the Eyes of thy most Blessed, and most Glorious Majesty, to do all this that thou hast done unto thy People, in delivering the dearly Beloved of thy Soul into the hand of an Enemy, and to chastise them by wicked men, who are thy Sword, the Staff, in whose hand is thine indignation.

O help me in the multitude of thy tender Mercies, to search what I have done, and not to cease going from step to step, until thine expectation be answered, until thy Corrections have such kindly effects upon

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my Soul, as that thou mayest say, Thou hast thine end, and that true Repentance of, and turning from Sin is brought forth, which thou aimest at in all thy rebukes, and chastisements of thy Children, for thy great end in chastising thy Children, is to make them partakers of thy Holiness.

And O Righteous Father, be pleased therefore, if I yet see not mine own particular Iniquities to shew them me, either by this published Declaration of the Transgressions of thy People, or by any other means thou pleasest, and leave me not until thou hast accomplished thy great designs upon my Spirit; and grant the same Grace unto all thy People in general, and leave us not until Sion become the Praise of the whole Earth. I say not, doubting but that such as these will be the Supplications of the many thousands of Israel, that are Israelites indeed.

I shall leave, Ingenious Reader, the following Discourse unto thy most serious and most diligent consideration; as that which eminently, and evidently concerns thy Peace in this thy Day. And the God of Israel shower down his Holy Spirit upon thee, and upon whole Sion, in an abundant manner and measure; To the Praise of his most Blessed, and most Glorious Name. Amen.

April 30. 1667.

Holy

TO THE READER.

*Holy David, the Man that was after Gods * own heart, said, My* 1 Sam 13
† flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judge- 14.
ments. Psal. 119.
129.

And Proverbs 28. 14. It is said, Happy is the man that fear-
eth alway ; But he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mis-
chief.

And now, even NOW, in an especial manner, what great rea-
son have we to be afraid, because of Gods Judgements? Considering
what dreadful judgements have already come upon us in these Nations,
and what terrible and astonishing Judgements seem to be hanging over
our heads, but as it were by a fine spun thread, and may come suddenly
with dreadful thunderings down upon us, so as none may be able to resist.

It therefore greatly concerns all Persons vvhatssoever,
to be afraid of nourishing any Evils vvhatssoever in
their bosoms, lest they prove as so much Gunpow-
der vvhithin them, that vvhhen the fiery Indignation
comes down upon them, may tear † them in pie-
ces, and there be none to deliver them. † Psal. 50.
22.

But it is a sad sign when persons are grown Preaching Proof, and
Printing Proof, and Judgement Proof.

A gracious Soul, when it hears a convincing Sermon, desires (as
those Acts 13. 42.) that those words may be Preached to them again the
next Saboth ; or wishes they might have it in Writing, or have it in
Print ; or if they meet with persons that deal plainly with them, they
desire more of that kindness from them.

But hardened Souls care little for such company, and regard not any
reproofs.

Prov. 13. 1. A Scourner heareth not rebuke.

Prov. 12. 1. Whoso loveth Instruction, loveth Knowledge ; but he
that hateth reproof is brutish.

Prov. 1. 20, 23. Wisdom cryeth without, she uttereth her Voice in
the Streets. — Turn you at my reproof ; Behold, I will pour
out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words unto you.

ERRATA.

E R R A T A.

REaders, though there be some small Errors in the Printing, that have escaped the Press, by reason of the Authors being some time absent, yet there is but one considerable word which you are desired to amend with you Pen, it is *page 78, line 29, where for unreasonableness, write unanswerableness.*

A Voice lifted up like a Trumpet, With a Loud and Full Sound :

Declaring, without Flattery or Partiality, to all that fear and love the Lord, small and great, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, (that truly are of the House of Jacob, whether they are Presbyterians, so called by way of distinction, or Independants, Anabaptists, or Quakers, or any other that pretend to have Interest in, or Relation to, the Lord JESUS CHRIST) what their Sins are: To the end they may wash their Hearts from Wickedness, that they may be saved.

Beloved and honoured, if You fear the Lord :



He Lion hath roared, who will not fear ? The great and glorious Lord of Heaven and Earth hath discovered his great displeasure against us, who will not tremble ? Our Father hath spit in our Faces, should we not be ashamed ? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesie ? The Lord hath said to his Prophet, Cry aloud, spare not ; lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet, and shew my People their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

O House of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord : Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established ; believe his Prophets, so shall you prosper : Believe all the words of the Lord, all the words of Truth, and of the Prophets of the Lord, that are written in this Book, shewing you YOUR TRANSGRESSIONS, & discovering YOUR SINS, which if you hide, you shall not prosper ; but if you confess and forsake, you shall surely find mercy, and be established.

Your Sins, O House of Jacob, have been manifold and great ; you have been great Sinners, and you have greatly given occasion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaspheme ; and you have greatly provoked the Eyes of his Glory.

And, O House of Jacob, that your Sins have been very great, is clear by that Voice of the Lord by his Prophet, *Isa 42. 24, 25. Who gave Jacob to the spoil, and Israel to the robbers ? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned ? For*

B

Pf. 15. 4

Amos 3. 8

Num. 12. 14.

Amos 3. 8

Isa. 58. 1.

Isa 2. 5.

2 Chron. 20. 20.

Prov. 28. 13.

they

A Trumpet sounding.

they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his Law; therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel; and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.

Did the Prophet *Isaiah* prophesie and declare this for the People of the Lord that were in his own time or days only? Doth not this Prophecy concern all the House of *Jacob* in all times, to whom it may be as fully applicable as unto them? Was it not written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come?

Isa 42.22 If so; then, O House of *Jacob*, KNOW YE that the Lord, against whom you have sinned, hath given his *Jacob* to the spoil, and his *Israel* to the Robbers; and it is of the Lord you are given to them. For your sins, you are a People robbed, and spoiled, and snared in holes, and hid in Prison-Houses: and ye ate for a prey, and none delivereth; and for a spoil, and none saith, Restore. And he hath poured upon you the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel: and added to this that sore Judgement of the Pestilence, that walketh in darkness, and the Destruction that wasteth at noon day.

Isa 42.24 Because ye would not walk in his ways, neither were obedient to his Law: But if you should say, We have walked in his Ways, and we have been obedient unto his Law, in some measure: We have frequented the Assemblies of his Saints, we have gone to the Church-Assemblies, where we have heard the good Word of God, in the Parish-Assemblies, and in other Assemblies: and the Word of the Lord hath been sweet unto us. And we have been Partakers of that great Ordinance of the Lords institution at his Last Supper, frequently; wherein we have endeavoured to do it in remembrance of him, and to shew forth his death until he come. And we have upon several occasions kept days of Fasting, and days of Thanksgiving, both publickly, and more retiredly. And wherein have we not walked in the Ways of God, nor been obedient unto his Laws?

Isa 58.2. The answer to these things, is this: It is true, O House of *Jacob*, that ye do, many of you, seek the Lord dayly, and delight to know his ways, as a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinances of their God: yea, ye ask of him the Ordinances of Justice, and ye take delight in approaching to God; and ye come and sit before the Prophets and Ministers of God as his People; and ye say, the Word of the Lord is good, and it is sweet: and with your mouth you shew much love. But notwithstanding all this, you are a People that have greatly sinned against the Lord: for you would not walk in his ways, neither were you obedient unto his Laws; and you must be shewed wherein. And you must know this, O House of *Jacob*, though there be many sins that ye cannot be said to be guilty of living in the constant practice of, as those others do, that cannot in any sence be called by the name of the House of *Jacob* or *Israel*; because they do not so much as pretend to be Professors of being the Lords servants, or being (as they call some) Puritans: but despise being such. Yet there are some sins that you, the generality of you, are as guilty of, as the generality of those others are: and those sins that you are guilty of, are as odious and hateful in the sight of God, as the other sins they live in are; as you will see by the Testimony of his Servants the Prophets. The sins that you are not guilty of, or at least cannot be said to live in them as others do, are these:

1. The Sins of common and prophane swearing, and taking the Name of God in vain, and of horrible and blasphemous speeches. The Sins of this sort are not your Sins that are Professors of the Fear and Love of God in your hearts : but are the Sins of wicked prophane loose Creatures, that make no protection of the Fear of God.

2. The Sin of a common prophane idle loose spending the Sabbath-day, or the first day of the Week, in sports and plays, and dancing and drinking, and vain discourses. This hath not been the Sin of any of them that have professed the fear of the Lord : But they have generally in their measure, (though not without their weaknesses) endeavoured conscionably to spend that day in exercises of another nature : Yea, they that profess the fear of the Lord, have generally a desire to keep, as a day to the Lord, one day in seven at least, either the first day of the week, or the seventh day ; and some of them have conscionably observed and kept both the seventh day, and the first day of the week. So that this hath not been your sin, O ye that may be called by the name of the House of *Jacob*, or of the Lords People ; but the sin of the prophane World.

3. The Sin of unconscionable and wicked lying and deceitful words, in jest or earnest, in the common manner of some that make no conscience at all of telling Lies ; is not a sin that they that fear the Lord live in : but their words and their reports of things, have generally been such as have credit upon the account of their profession ; and they are known to be such as will not lie ; and men will take their words in the things which they say or promise.

4. The sin of stealing, and common cheating and deceiving, which many make no bones of, is not a Sin that they live in that fear the Lord : but if before Conversion they have cheated any, yet when they come to fear the Lord, they do restore it again.

5. The Sin of Adultery or Fornication, or Whoredom, is a Sin that they do not live in, that fear the Lord : but they abhor such beastliness, such filthiness : as knowing that *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.*

Heb. 13. 4

6. The sin of Drunkenness and excessive abuse of those good Creatures that are given for the refreshment of our Bodies, (and not for intemperancy, nor for the destruction of the health of the Body, as intemperancy in the use of them is to many.) This is not a Sin of the House of *Jacob*. They that profess the fear of the Lord, do not live in the practice of it : But their sobriety and moderation therein, is known unto all men.

These six great Evils, and the Evils of the breach of the fifth and sixth Commandments, which some others make no Bones of, are Sins that are not at this day chargeable upon the People that profess the fear of the Lord. It cannot be said that they do live in the Practice of them : Though it cannot be denied but in most of these very Sins, some or other of them that fear the Lord have sometimes miscarried. But it may not be said that they, or any of them, do constantly live in these Sins from day to day, or week to week, as they do in some other Sins ; but their miscarrying in these things is very rare ; and when they do, they are grieved and troubled for, and repent of their so doing with all their Souls. And as for some of these Sins, very many of them that profess the fear of the Lord, were never guilty of the commission of them in all their Lives ; and if any of them ever were, it may be it is not one of a hundred, or one of a thousand of them that have so bin guilty ; and they

they have truly repented of them, and turned from them ; as Stealing, Cheating, Adultery, Fornication, or Murder, or common Swearing : I say these Sins that have been named, are not the Sins of the Lords People at this day : But if such things be discovered in any that profess to be the Lords People, and are Members of *Sion*, of the Churches of Christ, they soon come under Reproof and Censure ; and if they live in them, they are frequently Excommunicate or cast out of the Churches ; as unfit to have the Name of living in *Sion*, or of being accounted the *Israel* of God.

But, O House of *Jacob*, and you that are called by the Name of *Israel*, you are generally guilty at this day of great and horrible Evils ; for which the Lord hath brought upon you one Judgement after another ; and his anger is not yet turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. Therefore, O *Israel*, consider well that Word of the Lord already mentioned, *Isa. 42. 24, 25. Who gave Jacob to the Spoil, and Israel to the Robbers ? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned ?* This is spoken to you now, and you have sinned against the Lord. And though you have not lived in these Sins that have been mentioned, yet you have greatly sinned, and your have lived in Sins which are as great as they : Which are These :

I.
COVE-
TOUS-
NESS is
a Sin of
the Lords
People.
Ier. 5. 28.

I. The Sin of COVE TOUSNESS. This Sin is and hath been thy Sin, O House of *Jacob*, and ye that are called by the Name of *Israel*. This hath been one of your Sins, and this is one of your grand Iniquities, and your horrible Sins, as will be made to appear : And this is a sin wherein you have equalized, if you have not surpassed the deeds of the wicked. As appears by what follows.

Isa. 5. 4.

The Lord gave to the professing People of *England, Scotland and Ireland*, within these twenty years last past, as much liberty to worship him as their Hearts could wish, both in their Parish-Assemblies and other Assemblies ; They could not desire more liberty then was given to them, for every one to worship him in that way in which they were persuaded in their own hearts was according to the minde and will of God. And withal, he gave to multitudes of them the additions of Health and Wealth and Riches. What could have been done more for his Vinyard, then he did for them ? But he looked that they should bring forth Grapes, and they brought forth wild Grapes. Instead of devoting themselves to Him, and to his Service, and of presenting their Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which was their reasonable Service : they fell in love with this present World, and the Wealth, Profits, Pleasures, and Honours thereof ; as if there were more beauty in it then in him ; and as if the Pleasures, Profits, and Honours of the World did out-bid him : and they have chosen to set their Affections upon it, and to give up their Hearts to it, and to spend their whole Time, and Strength, and Care, and Parts, and Abilities, (which were given for more Noble Ends) to grasp much of it together : And they have forsaken their God, and retained but the Name of being his ; but he hath not been their Delight, their chief Joy and Solace, the chiefest of ten thousand. But their profits and incomes of outward things, they have been their delight and pleasure, and they have been as Cordials to them : But God hath not been in all their thoughts sometimes all the day long ; no, they have had other Lovers ; this business to be done, and that, and t'other business by which outward profits might come in, and they have been as meat and drink to them ; and they can many times forget to eat

eat their Bread, to do business of profit. But the service of the Lord, that; what's that? That must not hinder this business, and that business; that may be done when they have nothing else to do. How many days have been spent, day after day, and scarce half an hour spent in the service of God? And that with coldness enough, onely to keep the Name of being the Lords Servants; and therefore when nothing else could be done that was for worldly profit, then the Lord was served (in such a manner as it was) as on the first day of the week, when worldly business could not be done, then there would be a coming to the Assemblies of the Saints, and a kind of worshipping God, when the heart was far enough from him: for having been engaged in worldly business all the week long, it was full of worldly contrivances for profit and gain, and wandering up and down in the world, as in its proper element, when the bodily presence seemed to be before God. And so if sometimes in the week days there were an hour, or two or three, spent in the service of God in a day, (though very seldom) either at a Meeting, or it may be in a Cloister, the world had so much of the heart as very little of it was with God all the while, whether on the Sabbath day, or any other day; onely a conscience and a Name of being the Lords Servants put upon it, more then love to it, for other Lovers were set up in the hearts of Professors: fine Houses were beloved, and fine Gardens and Orchards, and fine Trades that brought in profits by hundreds, or five hundreds, or thousands by the year: O how sweet were these things! O how pleasant for delights! What, for him that never enjoy'd fifty pound in all his Life, that he could say was his own, free of debt, to fall upon such a Trade, or to come into such an Office or Offices, as now to have gained fifty pounds per year, a hundred, two hundred, or three hundred per year; O how sweet was this! What pleasure was there in this! What a delightful and desirable thing was it, to be so much above those that were his Equals before! To be now so and so advanced! How sweet were these things! So sweet, as they were still more and more desired; and when a man had so much, then he would fain have so much, and then so much, and then so much: and who was it that ever came to a stint, to a satisfaction? To say, I have enough for me and mine, I desire no more: I will never neglect one days service of God any more, to gain any more of this World, which I must shortly leave; and I know not, when I leave it, whether it will be a blessing or a curse to my Children; I know not whether I do heap it up for to be the hurt and the damage of me, and my Posterity after me, to nourish them up in idleness and fulness of Bread, and it may be in Sodom, even in all those hateful evils which I see many great mens Children are addicted to, that it may be it were better my Children had never been born, then to have such Temptations left to them, as my Estate may be to them.

Ecccl. 5.
13.

Who was it in all the three Nations that came to so much as this, while Wealth did flow in upon them? Who was it that had their hearts dis-engaged from the pursuit of it? How small was the number of them? But O thou that art named the House of Jacob, how greatly hast thou provoked thy God, by a perpetual backsliding? Thou art gone away backward; thou hast said in thy actions and thy deeds, *I have loved Strangers, and after them will I go*; so that there seems to be no hope of thy return. Jer. 2, 25.

Now consider, O thou backsliding Daughter, how the Lord resents this evil of thine. Harken unto that Voice of his by *Jeremiah his Prophet, Jer.*

2. 12, 13.

A Trumpet sounding

2.12.13. Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord: For my People have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the Fountain of living Waters, and have bowed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns, that can hold no water. My People have changed their Glory for that which doth not profit.

What a horrible thing was this? That you that are called the Lords People, that you that once professed that the Love and Favour of God was more desirable to you then ten thousand worlds; and that you could trample upon the Worlds Wealth, and Honours, and Profits, and Pleasures, and count them but as dung; in comparison of enjoying but one days communion with your God; and that though you should always be an afflicted and poor People; yet if you could but have the happiness and the privilege to be in the house of God, and in the Assemblies of his Saints, and to hear his Word, and enjoy communion with him in Prayer, you would reckon your selves exceeding happy, yea in better case then the highest Emperour upon Earth. How horrible and astonishing a thing was this, that those that once made these great professions, that they should so extravagantly set their hearts upon this World, as to forsake their God, their King, their Rock, their Shield, and their exceeding great Reward, their Father, and the Guide of their youth, their Strength, their Glory, their all in all; to dig and hew them out the vain perishing things of this World, which cannot afford them one drop of true comfort!

Would not this make the glorious and beautiful Angels in Heaven to blush, to think of it! and the blessed Saints that shine as the Sun, to be astonished! and all the Hosts of Heaven to be horribly afraid, at such unworthy, such mad and distracted deeds of the Sons of men; ten thousand times worse then him that is so bewitched with a painted Strumpet, that is a filthy Harlot, as to forsake a truly beautiful and faithful Bride?

O consider this, all ye that have so much forgotten God. Consider how he disgusts this Sin of loving this World, this Sin of Covetousness. Consider what title he gives it by his Servant and Apostle Paul, (Col 3.5.) he tells you it is Idolatry. So that in loving this World, you have set up an Idol in your heart. And you are also told by his Word, that *If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*: and ye are told by his Son himself, That *ye cannot serve God and Mammon*. But O what gross idolaters have ye been, that have so served the World as you have done, and so much neglected the service of your God? O consider how that Word hath been verified in you, that *the love of Money is the Root of all Evil*: You have so loved, and adored, and admired, and set up the World in your hearts, as it hath been the root of all your neglect of publick service to God, and to his People for his sake; even of your neglect of visiting the Fatherless and Widows in their afflictions; of your neglect of visiting the Lords Prisoners; of the neglect of Family-Duties two or three times a day; of neglect of taking pains with Children and Servants, and other Relations, to bring them up in the nurture and fear of the Lord; of neglect of Closet-performances, and of enjoying many sweet and blessed seasons in secret; of conversing with your God, that should have been your chief Joy.

Consider how this love of Money hath been the Root of all your sparing to deal your Bread to the hungry, and to cloath the naked, and to bring the poor

1 John 2.

15.

Math. 6.

24.

Luk. 16.

13.

1 Tim. 6.

10.

against COVETOUSNESS.

7

poor that were cast out, to your Houses; of neglect of drawing out your Soul to the hungry, and satisfying the afflicted Soul. Consider how the love of this World, and covering it, hath almost estranged you wholly from God, and from every good Work, wherein he might be glorified, and ye might have Peace.

Consider, ye Lovers of Gold and Silver, what *Moses* speaks of such as you, *Exod. 32. 31.* *O this People have sinned a great sin, and have made them Gods of Gold.* Did they sin a great Sin? You have much more. They made them Gods of Gold, but it was a sudden Temptation, and an Evil of a short continuance; and it appears not that they set their hearts and affections upon them. But you have set up your Bags of Gold and Silver, your Land and your Wealth, so in your Hearts, as to forsake your God, and to love your Gold more than your God; and if it were not so, your actions would witness the contrary: but your actions have testified, and do testify to your Faces whom you love most.

O foolish People, and unwise; Do ye thus requite the Lord? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee and established thee? Deut. 32: 6.

O this People that are called by the Name of *Israel*, they have sinned a great sin, they have made them Gods of Gold; and their very Hearts are set upon them, so as they have forsaken the Fountain of Living Waters, they have lightly esteemed the Rock of their Salvation; they have provoked him to Jealousie with strange Gods: Of the Rock that begat them they have been unmindful; and have forgotten God that formed them. Deut. 32: 15, 16.

Now consider, O House of *Jacob*, and ye that profess to be the Lords People, whether this great Sin of yours be not as great, if not greater, then the Sin of the prophane wicked Worldlings. Are they Idolaters? So are you: They have made themselves Idols: For as *Paul* speaks of some, *They made their Bellies their Gods*; so it may be said of their Lusts after other things, even the things of this World, their Gold, and Silver, and Treasures, they have made them their Gods also; but in that you have made you Gods of Gold, your Sin is greater then theirs, because it is against greater Knowledge, and greater Light, and against greater Grace. O what great aggravations have your Idolatries beyond theirs?

Phil. 3: 19

Your Sin is verily double to theirs; for you have in this committed two Evils: You have forsaken your true Glory, your dear and gracious, and glorious Lord, the Fountain of all Good, of all that's lovely and precious, of durable Riches, and substantial Good; for a Shadow, for a Trifle, for a fading Leaf, for that which hath no substance. Who would part with a substantial good thing, for a shadow of it? What is a shadow? A shadow is nothing; as soon as the light surrounds a thing, the shadow is vanished and is not, but appears to be nothing. So are all your Idols, whether Bags of Silver or Gold, or Merchandizes, or Stocks in Bank, or at Interest, or Houses and Lands, and Gardens, and Orchards; and pleasant Walks: Are they any more then a shadow of true Riches, of durable Riches and Substance? Are they so much? Can there be any kind of shadow of that Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, in these?

These Earthly Vanities, if they are a shadow, it is a poor shadow: But is it not an astonishing Error, that rational Creatures should grasp after the Shadow so eagerly, as to leave and forsake the Substance, to embrace the Shadow?

Now

A Trumpet sounding

Now this is your double evil, that you forsake your Gods, the Fountain of all Goodness, and dig out of this Earth for your selves such Vanities as cannot give your precious Souls one grain of Peace or true satisfaction, in the enjoyment of them: and yet they are your Gods, and you their Servants; and all or most of your Care, Parts, and Abilities, and your precious Time, are spent in the service of them.

Now the Sin of the poor blind World, is far less then yours. If they do serve these Idols as you do, yet they are not such Sinners as you are: For they have not that knowledge of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, as you have had. They never had such tastes how good the Lord is, as you have had: They never saw his Glory and Excellency, and unexpressible Loveliness, as you have seen it. They never had such blessed entertainments into his holy presence, as you have had.

But YOU, you are the double-dy'd Sinners, the crimson Sinners, the scarlet Sinners; that though the Lord hath appeared unto you twice, yea ten times, yea ten hundred times, have yet departed from him, and have sinned this great Sin, and made you Gods of Gold. You are most horrible Idolaters; your sins have over-passed the deeds of the Wicked.

Jer. 28.

But some may say, *This Trumpet sounds aloud, and with a very piercing and shrill Voice shews us our Transgressions, and the vileness of them, which we cannot deny; for we cannot hide them: They are open to the view of God, Angels, and Men; though we have not so clearly seen them our selves, as we should see them; though it might have been our happiness to have seen them clearly long ago.*

The Reply whereunto is, That the Trumpet must yet sound louder and louder; and must cry aloud, and not spare for any account; to shew the Lords People their Transgressions, and the House of Jacob their Sins.

NOT upon the account of hiding them from the World, that they may not see the nakedness of Jacob; for that nakedness hath been too visible already to them.

NOR yet upon the account of the Name of the Lord, lest it should be more reproached by the sinfulness of the Lords People: for that blessed and glorious Name hath been and is greatly prophaned thereby already.

BUT on the account of the Name of the Lord, that it may be hallowed, that it may be sanctified and glorified in all his righteous Judgements that are come, one upon the neck of another, upon his People; are these Transgressions of Jacob to be shewed to them, and to the World, with a SPARE NOT. Spare not especially this great Sin, the Root of many Sins, Covetousness; wherein the great and glorious Name of the Lord hath been so much dishonoured: Nor yet to spare those other Sins of which they are to be declared guilty, (great numbers of them) to the end the Lord may be justified when he speaketh, and be clear when he judgeth.

Psal. 51.4

Therefore, O House of Jacob, to speak yet a little louder in your Ears, that it may sink down into your Hearts, you are to be informed further, That as you have been Idolaters, and such Idolaters as have exceeded the Wicked in Idolatry; so you have been also Adulterers.

Adultery is a Sin that is very hateful and loathsome to many People that know little of God, or have little or no love to him; and it is a Sin that is very shameful. It is a very shameful thing that it should be said among men, That such or such a man is an Adulterer, a Whoremonger: If any man be so, he

he is counted a filthy fellow, a vile fellow. As odious as an unclean filthy Adulterer, or Fornicator is in the Eyes of all civil People : so odious hath your Sin been in playing the Harlot with this vain World, this deceitful World, who hath bewitched you with her painted Face, as if she were some great Beauty ; whereas, when her Vizard is off, she appears to him that looks upon her in true light, but a miserable worthless thing, in which there is no true felicity at all, no beauty at all ; but appears to be vanity and vexation of Spirit : But O how have you, most of you been deceived by her ! Have you not thought, and do you not think, that there is much sweetness and pleasure in taking your fill of the love of her ? Are not your Hearts so far gone to her, as that you are her constant Servants, her humble Servants, her diligent Servants ? Are you not continually embracing of her, hugging of her in your Bosoms ? Can you easily or willingly be out of her company ? Can you find in your heart to part with her, though on a good account ? Is not the thought of that unpleasant to you ? Will you not strain your Consciences so far as to make them crack, rather then part with this Paramour of yours ? Will you not rather make Shipwreck of a good Conscience, then be deprived of this Harlot ? Have you not, many of you, already suffered many a bleeding wound in your Consciences, rather then you would part with her ? Are there not some things which some of you have done full sore against your minds and Consciences, within these five or ten years, on purpose to keep your beloved Mistress in your Bosom ; which without wounding your Conscience, you thought you could not so safely keep : O how hard & how grievous is it for you to think of parting with her, though on the very best account ?

Consider this, all ye that too much forget God. Consider this, ye Adulterers and Adulteresses ; know ye not that the friendship of the World is enmity with God ? Whosoever therefore will be a Friend of the World, is the Enemy of God. *Ps. 50. 22. Jam. 4. 4.*

Consider how ye are enslaved by this deceitful Strumpet ; and how hateful your Adulteries have been ; how your whorish Hearts have grieved the good Spirit of God ; how you have gone a whoring from under your God ; what filthy Adulterers and Adulteresses you have been. Consider whether your Sin of Adultery be not more hateful and more odious, then the Adultery of an unfaithful Husband or Wife, that goeth to another Bed : Their unfaithfulness is hateful, but it is but unfaithfulness unto a poor mean Creature (whatever their quality be ;) but yours is unfaithfulness to your glorious and ever blessed Creator, to him that is never unconstant to you, nor never gave you any temptation to be to him ; but is most lovely in himself, and is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. But vile Wretches that you are, how great have been your Whoredoms notwithstanding ? Had you any pretence for your forsaking him, and embracing the present World ? Was he a barren Wilderness unto you, or a Land of Darkness ? What Iniquity have ye found in him ? *Jer. 2. 5, 31.*

Will you say, You were, some of you, poor in this World ? What then ? Did he not chuse you to be rich in Faith, and Heirs of a Kingdom ? And was not your condition therein better then the greatest Emperours upon Earth ? Could ye not be content to be an Heir of a Kingdom, but like foolish Children must sell your Birthright for a mess of Pottage, and chuse to fall in league, into friendship with this World, and consequently to enmity with God ? What have you done ? Know ye not what ye have done ? Know ye not that the friend-
C
ship

A Trumpet sounding

Ship with this World, is enmity with God? Knew ye not that if ye fell in love with that Strumpet, she would steal your Hearts from God?

Behold, This is the plain assertion of the Spirit of God, Jam. 4. 5. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the World, is the Enemy of God.

Where are ye now? What a sad gulf have ye plunged your selves into, ye Adulterers and Adulteresses, that have treacherously departed from the Lord, and are become very filthy, very lewd, very polluted, very treacherous Creatures?

Feb. 13. 4. Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge: And where will ye appear, that have been such Adulterers in grain, and have so greatly provoked the Eyes of his Glory with your abominable Uncleanesses, and sinful Dalliances with a deceitful Harlot, and have not had so much as thoughts of forsaking her, to return to your first Husband; but you have loved Strangers, and after them will ye go? And what will ye do in the end thereof?

Jer. 2. 25. But that they may not be charged with this great Sin of Covetousness, (which is more hateful in the Lords People, then Idolatry or Adultery in others) whom (it may be) the Lord will not charge with it. Let me now declare, before I proceed any farther, who they are, that in the clear Light of the Scripture, do appear to be guilty of it; not naming Persons, but leaving them to acknowledge themselves to be the men or women, before the Lord, and before some of his People, if they have a Heart so to do; to the end he may be glorified.

And first, They that having made a Profession of being Saints, and have some of them been Members of Churches, and have for a time been great Lovers of the Word of God, and with desire have desired to be fed with the sincere Milk of the Word, in Lectures and other Sermons, and in several Meetings; and having been so fed, it hath been sweeter unto them then the Honey and the Honey-Comb. And yet afterwards, having opportunities of trading and employment in the World, or of Offices Military, or Civil, have found Wealth coming in thereby; and by degrees have weaned themselves from the blessed Paps of Sion's Consolation, and from the Milk of the abundance of her Glory, whereof they might have suck'd and been satisfied; and have gone to the Breasts of this World, and taken pleasure in them; and her Breasts have satisfied them almost at all times: Having had the World flowing in upon them plentifully, and delighting themselves therein, although they have been sensible of great Leanness, and barrenness of Spirit, and have lost, in a great measure, their first Love: But the pleasures of this new Lover hath so taken away their hearts, as they have therewith contented themselves, though without the Heart-solacing Comforts of their true Husband, which sometimes they enjoyed. I say such as these have been guilty of this great Sin, as appears by these following Scriptures: Hos. 2. from vers. 5. to 16. Ezek. 16. from vers. 15. to 30. Jer. 2. 11, 12, 13. Ezek. 23. 35. Deut. 32. 15, 18, 19.

And secondly, They are those covetous persons that out of eager and thirsting desires of heaping up more and more of the Wealth of this World; though they have had comfortable Estates, for the supply of themselves and theirs already, and have had no need so to do; yet have neglected almost all opportunities of enjoying Communion with their God, their first Husband, either in hearing Lectures or Sermons, or in meeting together in Church-Meetings, or in taking any solemn constant times of waiting upon their Lord, in Closets or in Family-Duties.

And

And if sometimes these things have been done, yet it hath been but when worldly business would admit of it; and many of these Opportunities have been neglected week after week, and day after day. The which many of those that have lived in the Families with them, and have bin in Church-fellowship with them, can plentifully witness. And it is known how many days have bin past by some of these idolatrous, adulterous covetous Persons, and but one half hour in a day spent in any Religious performance, (yea sometimes not that) and that in the Evening, when they have been wearied with other business, and been fit for nothing but to sleep and dream; or in the Morning, when haste about other business hath hurried them away: And when done, done with formality, coldness, and dead-heartedness enough.

I say, Those that have to greatly neglected these, and many other religious Duties, to pursue the Worlds Profits, though they have had no necessity to do, having comfortable Estates, these are the Covetous Persons by the Word condemned; and not those whose necessities constrain thereto at sometimes: for many blessed Servants of the Lord have been so put to it for want of daily supplies for themselves and Families, as they have been fain to work morning early, and evening late, to provide daily Bread for their Family; having onely had from hand to mouth: Some single Persons, and some that have had others depending upon them; and if some of these should be charged with this Sin, they that so charge them, may wrong the Generation of the Just, and condemn the Innocent.

But many of these, that have had very little of this World, and have received no Contributions from others, have appeared at Lectures and Church-Meetings, more constantly, and far more diligently, then they who have had twenty times their Estates. And therefore they that are and have been in a mean condition, and unavoidably are compelled to much daily Labour, are not hereby so much condemned. But many of these will rise up in Judgement against their Brethren, and condemn them, in that though they have been very needy and necessitous; yet they have been more constant Attendants upon the solemn Worship of God, then them.

And that these that (though not for need, but) for desire of much Wealth, have made so bold as to neglect holy Duties, are the sinful Covetous Persons, appears by these several Scriptures, 1 Tim. 6. 10. Heb. 13. 5. Col. 3. 5. Demas hath forsaken us, and loved this present World. 2 Tim. 4. 10. Luk. 16. 13. Jam 4. 5.

But thirdly, Another character of a covetous Person, is this: That he is very close fisted, and very unfree and unwilling to communicate any thing worth mentioning, to the supply of others wants, or to any other good Uses: but these Persons generally do with eager, and hungering, and thirsting desires, hoord up the Wealth of this World, and lay up Bag after Bag, Wealth to Wealth, or do adde Land to Land, Houle to House, Field to Field, and in this they take great pleasure. But are very hard to be drawn to part with any thing considerable, to any good Use.

But it may be, these Wealth-mongers will say, *I cannot accuse my self hereof, for I have parted with sometimes five Shillings at a time, sometimes ten Shillings, sometimes forty Shillings, sometimes ten Pounds at a time, for good uses; when I have seen need and occasion.* And it may be some good honest poor People will witness for them, they have given good Gifts at such a time and such a time, when they have been moved thereunto; and therefore who will dare to say that they are covetous?

A Trumpet sounding

Esai. 12.3

To which the answer is, That notwithstanding this, it may appear and will appear, that many of you that have thus done, are meer covetous Earthworms, meer filthy Idolaters, and Adulterers; and this poor mask cannot hide you, especially you that have had, and you that yet have, very considerable Estates in this World; as many of you have had, and many of you yet have, whom I will not name, I say you will be found lamentable covetous Persons, such as whose Covetousness the Lord abhors, and his People shall, and it may be do abhor. It may be you have given this, and that, and t^other Gift, to relieve the Poor and Needy: But do but consider what you have done, I mean in what degree and proportion to your Estates you have done it; and then consider whether a poor Brother that hath cast in three pence or four pence to the weekly Contributions, hath not cast in six times, it may be ten times as much as you. Do ye not know what our blessed Lord spake of the poor Widows two Mites?

You, of your abundance, have it may be, contributed sometimes that which hath seemed to be something in the Eyes of a mean Person, and they have blessed the Lord for it; but what was it in the Eyes of the Lord? Consider that; ye that know what your own Estates have been; what your yearly incomes by your Rents, Lands, Tradings, Offices and Employments have been; what your Gains have been by your great Bargains and great Purchases which you have made; and how much hath been cast upon you by Estates coming to you by Marriages, or by deceased Friends, or good years Crops of Corn, or Sugars, or by any other Merchandizes which ye have traded in.

In these Gospel-Days, since the Grace of the Gospel hath been so abundantly revealed, the Lord now expects that the glorious Riches of Grace that is now made known unto his Saints, should be a far greater inducement unto them to abound in all good Works, then all the several Precepts and Injunctions in the Law: Wherein he expressly ty'd them by several distinct Precepts, to very large Contributions and Communications of their Estates, amounting in all it may be to more then a sixth part of their yearly incomes: For now under the Gospel, the Lord hath left his People to their freedom, as to measure; giving them no prescriptions of measures herein: as if he would now try his People what they will do freely, seeing in these blessed days he hath communicated so freely to them: And will it not now be their shame to come short of what in the Law he expressly required? It is said, Heb. 13. 16. *To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* He is well pleased when his People abound in offering such Sacrifices, but he loves a cheerful Giver; and therefore now doth not constrain, but expects it should be done of a ready mind.

Therefore it would well become a man who hath Three hundred Pounds *per annum*, coming in by Rents or Trading, cheerfully and freely to part with Sixty Pound *per annum* at the least, for the honour of his gracious Lord, who hath freely and graciously given him so large incomes, much exceeding what many, very many of his fellow-Servants have: The Lord having given him also the clear evidence of an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for him, over and above these outward things. If all these Riches of Grace extended to a poor miserable Worm, will not induce him with a willing heart to return back so much of his own to his

his Lord again, when he knoweth that with such Sacrifices he is well pleased; that man is a very Churl. And as it would become a man of Three hundred *per annum*, to return to the service of his Lord more then a sixth part thereof, so much more is it the concernment of him that hath Six hundred *per annum* coming in, to part freely with more then a fourth part thereof: and him that hath a Thousand Pounds *per annum*, to communicate freely for the Lords sake, more then a third part thereof: For the greater a mans yearly incomes are, in the better capacity is he to exceed them of lesser Estates: And for to observe their Rule of Proportion, and to do no more, would be very unbecoming him.

Now I say, You that have plentiful Estates, that say you have been communicative; consider what you have done; and know you, many of you, that those your Contributions that you have made, from time to time, are contemptible; because of the shortness and the niggardliness of them: and know that the unworthiness of your Spirits herein, will be ere long clearly discovered; and that you are filthy, covetous, vile Persons, and have proved your selves to be Churles, and not liberal, kind and bountiful; and though some it may be have accounted you bountiful and merciful, when out of your abundance you have given it may be ten or twenty Shillings, or five Pounds, to the Relief of a poor Person, or a poor Family: yet the time is coming when such vile persons as you shall no more be called liberal; nor such Churles as you be said to be bountiful: But many a poor House-keeper that out of their Labours have given but Six-pence, will appear to be more bountiful by many degrees then some of you, that have given ten pounds, five pounds, or three pounds at a time, out of your great Estates.

Isa. 32. 5.

So that this is the third Character of him that is a Covetous person, who is an Idolater, &c. He is a Person that is close fisted, and very hardly is drawn to communicate of the Wealth of this World; but loves to hoard it up, and takes great pleasure therein; though it may be he will be much in holy Duties, if his Estate consist in Lands or Rags, and he be not one that's in a way of Trading; then you shall, it may be, have much of his Bodily Presence at Meetings; and he will be ready to do any Service in his Person that may cost him nothing: Any thing, so his or her purse may be spared. But you may as soon wring Blood from their hearts, as any thing that is nolle and handsome, and like a liberal Person, proportionable to their Estates. But that this Lover of Money, this niggardly Person, is the Covetous Idolater, is clear in the Scripture also; as in *Jam. 5. 3. Jer. 22. 13. to 17. Isa. 32. 5, 6, 7, 8. Psal. 112. 4, 5, 9. Isa. 58. 6, 7. Isa. 58. 1 Cor. 9. 5. Ezek. 33. 31.*

And under one or all of these three Characters, especially the last, you may find out the Covetous Persons that are Idolaters, and that do so filthily play the Harlot, and commit Adultery, as hath been declared.

But now, though this may be said of the House of *Jacob*, and of them that may be said to be the Lords People; yet among these I hope (nay, I question not) that there are a few that are free, it may be perfectly free, from this evil; that never set up this World in their Hearts, but are very loose from it, and are no way engaged in their affections to it, so as to make it their Joy, or their Delight; but have intirely set their affections on things above: and that can and do freely and liberally part with it, communicating of what they have, whether little or much, it may be to more then a third part of what their yearly

A Trumpet sounding

yearly incomes are, and delight in their very Souls to be doing good, and communicating bountifully. But these are but few.

But O how great is the number of the guilty of this Sin, among them that are called the Lords People, of all sorts and Professions!

O how many of them that are accounted the Ministers of God, may charge themselves, and be charged with two great degrees of it! Both among the *Presbyterians*, (for distinction so called) and the *Ind-pendants*, and the *Baptised Congregations*, and they of the *Quaker's Societies*. They that are the *Elders* among the three former, and that are sometimes *Speakers* among the latter; some of them all have great blots, and great stains of this kind; and few but are more or less guilty of it: So that the *Lords complaint* against *Israel* of old, may be his complaint at this day: *Jer. 6. 14. & 8. 10. For from the least of them, even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to Covetousness; and from the Prophet even to the Priest, every one dealeth falsely.* (A covetous Professor deals falsely with God.) And how have the Ministers and Preachers of the Word covered this World? And how have they thirsted after places of Profit? They that should have been blessed Examples of the greatest detestation of this Evil, even they, many of them, have been very evil Examples to their Hearers; both in covering to scrape up much of this World together, and in close keeping it, when they had it. How many of the *Lords Ministers* have so hoarded up the Wealth of this World, as to be able to give great Portions to their Daughters, great Estates to their Children, when little hath at any time appeared of their bounty to the Poor and Needy.

I do not blame the good People that have been free and liberal in communicating of their Temporals to them that communicated to them in Spiritu-als: for that is Fruit that will abound to their account, however their Ministers have improved it: But rather have great Reason to blame many, that have not been so free as they ought, in communicating to those Servants of the Lord that they have pretended to love and affect much, whose covetous Hearts have not suffered them to communicate to them according to their Estates, as they ought; but they that have been covetous and close fisted to the Poor, have been too much so to their Ministers or Elders also; and their sparing giving, will one day be remembered against them.

I say I do not blame them that have been free to their Ministers, but I blame the Ministers, many of them, that have so much loved this Worlds Wealth, and set their Hearts upon it; and have not been so free and generous to the Poor and Needy, as became them. I speak of those that have had good and comfortable Estates cast in upon them. I speak not of others, who (some of them) have been in a poor and needy condition themselves.

And I blame those Covetous Pastors that for more gain have left one People to go to another, and that have preached for hire, and prophesied for reward, rather than for love to the work; and that must indent for so much by the year, or else they could not be satisfied, and could not be content to sit down with a People that loved them, and to trust the Lord to incline their hearts to provide comfortably for them; but they must have Engagements for so much by the year, or else the Work must be left, which hath rendred the Work of the Lord contemptible.

Consider this, ye Ministers and Prophets, whose ways have much displeased the Lord, and provoked the Eyes of his Glory.

Ought

Ought not his Service to have been preferred before Wealth and outward Profits? Was there not enough in him? Would he not have been your Shield and your exceeding great Reward? Be ashamed, and mourn, and weep for this, ye unworthy Shepherds, lest you and your Off-spring for whom ye desired Wealth, be made a scorn and a reproach. How many Children of covetous Ministers have been such, as a blast, and not a Blessing from the Lord, hath attended them.

And as for the Ministers of *Independant*, and of the *Baptised Congregations*; who have not so indented for a maintenance, it's true; yet some of them, yea many of them, have been unworthy covetous Persons also; loving and hugging the things of this present World; not having freely given, as they have freely received: and as for some of them that have not received a maintenance from their People, having Trades, or Lands, or Estates of their own to live on, but have preached freely, yet they have been, some of them, as it is well known, very unworthy covetous Persons, in eager pursuing their Trades and Offices, and Employments for gain, with the neglect of many a Duty, which it would have become them to have done: And though some of them have had very great Estates (comparatively) yet were they never satisfied, but were still pursuing eagerly the Profits of the World, and minding that, as if it were their chief Joy: And though their Gifts have been excelling many of their weak Brethren, yet they have been greatly neglected, and have been improved onely when their Worldly business would give them leave. And for their close-fistedness, it hath been such as hath been gross and absurd in the Eyes of them that have taken inspection into their actions, though it may be (poor Souls) they have not had the courage or the confidence to reprove it: or if they had, would it have been to any purpose? They have appeared, and do appear so fixed in their covetous ways, and so settled upon their Lees, and hardened in their ways, that they could not bear Reproof; and they have had devices to hide and cover their Covetousness; but the Lord seeth and knoweth all their wickedness in their Covetousness, which his Soul abhors.

And as for those called *Quakers*, they also have among them many very covetous Persons, which are eagerly pursuing the World in their several Callings, and do hoord up Wealth plentifully, but part with any thing very sparingly; and yet some of these, are men that are sometimes Speakers among them. It is true, some of them that are said to be of the Ministry among them, have but little of the World, and it may be do little mind the things of this World; but there are but few such. But others of them love Wealth, and love Greatness, and mind Earthly things in a shameful manner also; and the time is coming, when their Covetousness will be discovered, and their hugging and close keeping the things of this world, as if they were their greatest happiness, will be made manifest, and all their hidings and coverings off with specious pretences, will not serve their turns: Some of them being Shop-keepers, and some Merchants, and others of other Trades; that yet do preach among them sometimes; but it may be will not be said to be of their Ministry, because they will be more free to follow the World, which they eagerly scrape up together, with the expence of most of their time and strength and care, as if their Life consisted in the abundance of the things they possess: and if they do communicate (I mean some of them, yea most of them, but

but not all) they do nothing noble, nor handsome, nor any thing proportionable to their Estates, nor so as to find acceptance with the Lord, who loves to have his People liberal and noble, and not niggardly nor base.

This that I speak to Ministers, to Prophets, to Elders, to Teachers, to Men of Gifts and Abilities for preaching the Word of God, of the several understandings, *Presbyterians, Independants, Baptised, and Quakers*, I do well know to be true. I wish it were not so: Though I also believe that some that I know well, (and it may be more that I know not) though of several understandings, are men that are very unblameable herein; and they are very beautiful ones in *Sion*, and the Glory of Christ; but the number of these is very small, compared with the others that are more or less guilty of this horrible Evil.

And as the Ministers, and gifted men of the several understandings, so the people, the generality of the people, that are hearers of all these, and Members of Churches and Societies among them, are guilty, very guilty of the same evil; some very grossly so, and some in lesser degrees, but very generally more or less are they guilty.

Which appears in their several capacities thus; Some that are eminent persons, and worthy persons for gifts and parts, and for Zeal and forwardness in many good things, who having no trades but yearly incomes, some of 500 l. per annum, some of a 1000 l. per annum; some more, some less; of which quality I know several that have no Trades, but have such yearly incomes, and so are not under temptations of neglecting Meetings, and Lectures, and private and publick performances, who yet do appear to be as covetous as those that do; as appears by their excessive backwardness to good works, and their hoarding up their Wealth, and adding Wealth to Wealth, as if all their happiness consisted in being wealthy, and all blessings for themselves and Children (if they have Children) consisted therein. Miserable wretched covetous persons are they, and the Lord knows them to be so, and they have very much provoked him, although some of them have been very forward at Meetings and Lectures, and very ready to every thing that was commendable, except the parting with their Wealth; Any service they would offer to the Lord that ye could desire, that might cost them little or nothing; Who more ready then they to many services? But you must spare their Minion, their beloved Darling, the Wealth of this World; but if they were tryed here, then they were tryed indeed; and though for shame they could not but do something, yet have they done it sparingly enough, and shall reap sparingly enough, notwithstanding their other services: What though they have been ready to preach, and been forward at Meetings? And what though they could speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels? And what though they have hazarded their Liberties to come to Meetings? And what though they have hazarded their very Lives? Yet having another Beloved in their hearts; having no heart to part with the Wealth of this World, to supply the Members of Christ in Sicknels, and in Prison, and in Nakedness, and in Hunger, the Love of God hath not appeared in them, but the Love of the World hath had the chief place in their hearts. How dwelleth the Love of God in that man or woman that shuts up the Bowels of their compassion from Christ in his Members? Or if they have given to such, they have done it sparingly, grudgingly, and niggardly: But God loveth a cheerful Giver. But these covetous

Earthworms

Earthworms must know, that this hath been their great Sin; and until they reform herein, they must expect no great blessing from the Lord, but rather a blasting.

Show my People their transgression, their Sin in not drawing out their Soul to the Hungry, and bringing the Poor, that are cast out, to their Houses; and that they hide themselves from their own flesh, and satisfy not the afflicted Soul: Whereas, if they did these things in that full and ample manner as became them, and as were suitable and proportionable to their Estates; then their Light might break forth as the Morning, and their Health might spring forth speedily; and their Righteousness should go before them, & the Glory of the Lord should be their Reward; they should call, and the Lord should answer, &c. Isa. 58. 2.

But this sin cleaves yet as close to them as the Skin to their Backs, and when will they reform! And some of them, the Husband and the Wife both agree in a covetous humour, and all their actions discover it: And though Aldermen and Aldermens fellows for Estates, yet they are as near and penurious in their way, as their Taylor or Shoo-maker; and as little Generosity, in some casts, appears in them: for they that are covetous, appear so every manner of way; onely in some things for a name, they will appear otherwise; it may be their Houses and their Habits will be stately, but they will be as sparing as any man in many other things; even in poor ordinary things, which some others of less Estates, will be ashamed of. And both Husband and Wife, are of a temper herein.

But some may complain their Husbands are so; and some, their Wives do grudge, and will not allow of other things. But where there is an Estate, the Wife, if she be not covetous, may do much notwithstanding the Husband; but the Husband, if he be not covetous, may do much more, notwithstanding the Wife: and that will be but a slender excuse for either of them, if they love the sin in their Hearts: Though they have such a pretence for it, let them therefore look to it.

But some are now Widows, who it may be while their Husbands lived had a seeming fair excuse; but how great is their Sin, if they be the same still? And have an Estate of a thousand or eight hundreds per year, to command, and at their own disposal, while they live; and it may be no Children to care for, but what are provided for: What a price have they put into their hands, to be good Stewards of such a plentiful Estate? And yet it may be they do not so much as a poor man that gives six pence a week to some in need: What is it to part with several hundreds yearly out of such an Estate, to good Uses, to refresh the Bowels, and cloath the Backs of many poor Saints, or others? Do these think by parting with fifty pounds per year to such Uses, they do well enough? Are such as these good Stewards of the manifold gifts of God? Will it be said of such, That their Prayers and their Alms are come up before God? Their Penuriousness may rather cause their Prayers to be spread as Dung upon their Faces.

But one great Alderman, or Aldermans fellow, that hath a great Estate in Land, and a great and vast Trade also; says, *I have married but so many Children, and have so many more to marry.* And another great late Officer, that hath a great Estate in Land and Money, without a Trade; and another great Merchant, whose Estate is in Bank and Trade at least twenty thousand pound;

A Trumpet sounding

says, *I have so many and so many Children to dispose of also; and we must lay up for them: and others have got Knighthoods, and all have got great Repute in the World, and we must bear a part answerable to it; and we cannot but be frugal in our way, and sparing in giving, having such occasions.*

But ye covetous Earthworms, Do ye think that these pretences will be a sufficient Plea before the Bar of the great Judge of all the Earth? Do ye think that your Estates were given you onely to be Stewards of? Or do you think they were given you to be alone at your own disposal, for your own pleasure and your own ends, so as you are never to be accountable for them to your great Lord, how vainly and foolishly soever you dispose of them? Do you think it is not a foolish and sinful disposal of them, to lay out so many hundreds; or so many thousands, which you have hoorded up, to marry a poor child in Girl, putt up with pride, because of much Wealth, to a man of so many hundreds per year, or so many thousand pounds Estate in Merchandize, to the hazard of the Soul of your Child? Do you think your Children cannot be happily disposed of in the World, if they have not so many hundreds, or so many thousands for their Portion? Have you not seen, that they that have had neither thousands nor hundreds for their portions, have been blessed, being the Children of good men; and have had greater Estates a dozen years after Marriage, then others that have had hundreds, yea thousands, for their portions, who have been blasted and curst, lying in Prisons for Debt and Penury? Do ye not know that the Blessing of the Lord maketh rich? And can you that are covetous Professors expect a Blessing from the Lord? Never look for it.

But to come to persons of a meaner Rank, that are Professors, and are called the People of the Lord, who have Estates in Land, it may be of fou score, or a hundred, or sixscore pounds per year, which they have gotten by trading, and drive their Trade still, having a good Stock, and it may be but one Child, or it may be two or three Children; but have always been so used to a mean Way, as they can live with the profits of their Trades, and do so live and lay up their incomes for that one or more Children, and adde more Wealth to Wealth still; for this may be much to them that live always in a plain and mean way: But if they be moved to contribute part of their Estates to the supply of a poor Family, they will it may be do a little; but it may be not so much as they that have a less Estate, and more Children, and in no sort proportionable to what their yearly layings up are, if it be compared with what the Lords People were indispensibly required to do, under the Law.

You that have but one Child, if God should have given you five or six Children, I hope you would not grudge to maintain them. But to give out so much yearly out of your layings up, as to maintain two or three Children, it is a hard thing to perswade you to; though you might do it, and much more, and yet live as comfortably as you do: and it may be a greater Blessing might come on what remains for that one Child ye have, or two, or more, whatever they be.

But O the love of this World, how is it rooted in the Hearts of Professors! And every one from the least to the greatest, is given to covetousness. They of fifty pound per year Estate, are as covetous as those of a thousand; and those of a thousand pound per year, as covetous as those of fifty; and they think if they can but hide what their Estates and Trades and Incomes are, and bring

bring forth some little instances of their poor Liberality, with pretences of unknown Charity, unto men, that they may not know how bad they are, that it is enough : Not considering what God sees and knows.

But while I am speaking of great and small, that have Estates well known to the Lord and themselves, and live with much less than their yearly incomes are : I do not intend hereby to reprove those that drive Trades, and it may be among men may be accounted some body, who yet notwithstanding have but small Estates, and if they should contribute largely, might give other mens Estates ; having little of their own, when every man is paid. But let such be sparing for the Gospels sake ; though others for the Gospel sake ought not to be sparing, yet they ought : for that were an unworthy thing : to spend prodigally, either on their Bellies or Backs, or to give liberally to others, when it is not their own to spend or give : Such have been a dishonour to the Gospel ; and the Lord keep his poor People from so doing. God requires of a man according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not.

But it is you that are the Great Sinners, the great Idolators, the great Adulterers, that have hundreds of Pounds free of Debt, or hundreds, or five hundreds per year, more or less, that delight to hoord it up ; and have your affections so engaged unto it, as you cannot endure to part with any thing that is considerable of it, nor on good accounts.

And this is the Sin, THE great Sin which the House of Jacob, the Lords People are guilty of : This is the Epidemical Sin, the general Disease among them, though not of every individual Person of them ; excepting onely what is before excepted. But it is so general a Sin, as there are but few left to bear witness against it : for it is a rare thing for any to be a witness against himself ; and because that from the least to the greatest every one hath been given to Covetousness, there is few left to bear a Testimony against it : but they have said one to another in their hearts, *Beav with me, and I will beav with thee*. The Minister that preached the Lecture, or other Sermon, could not reprove the covetous Shopkeeper, Merchant or Gentleman that was his Hearer, for fear lest he should with-hold his Gifts from him. The Elders of the Independent and Baptised People, and those called the Ministry among the Quakers, were the same, if they were supplied by their Hearers ; or if not, then having Estates of their own, they have been eager in getting more still ; and so closely kept their Wealth, that they could not blame others that did so also : and the People they could not blame their Teachers, nor one another for Covetousness, for they were all alike, for every one, from the least to the greatest, were given to Covetousness. And therefore it was a thing rarely or never known, that ever the Churches proceeded against any Member, meely for Covetousness : That either the Presbyterian or any other of the Congregations or Societies ever excluded any Member for Covetousness ; though there is as plain a Rule for that as for Drunkenness. Yet I never heard that any Member was ever proceeded against for that onely, though there have been multitudes of them, that as much deserved to be cast out of Fellowship, as some that have been cast out for Drunkenness, or Adultery, or other Evils, for which they have been justly excommunicate.

But though the Rule is plain, That any that is called a Brother, that is a covetous Persons, we are not to keep company with ; and it is as plain, That

1 Cor. 5. 11

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such shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, nor of Christ : Yet such have been imbraced, and are imbraced in the Bosom of the Churches, and some of them are highly esteemed in the Churches (though not for their Covetousness) for their Gifts and Abilities to preach, and to feed the Flock, and for their name of Greatness in the World; the poor Flock loving to have some silken Sheep among them, even Persons of repute in the World.

But Covetousness hath been, as hath been said, so general a Disease, that the little could not reprove the great, nor the great the little; and so the Churches have been generally defiled and polluted, and the Name of the Lord hath been greatly dishonoured among them.

And of this Sin of the love of this World, and the great delight that many Professors have in it, and their close cleaving to it, and their sinful lustful desires after it; it may be said, as is said of the whorish Woman, *Prov. 7. 26. She hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her. O how sad is it to consider of the many hundreds, of those that have seemed to be no little ones, nor no Fools, but those that have been great men, and wise men, and strong men, men of no mean parts, that have fallen down wounded at her feet, and have been carried away by her as an Ox to the slaughter, and have truly been slain by her?*

For the Profits and Pleasures, and Honour and Glory of this World, is none of the meanest Engines which the Devil uses, by which he destroys so many Souls. If it had been weak and mean, he would never have used it as his last and greatest Engine against the Lord of Glory himself.

But though he used it in vain against him, against whom it was not possible for him to prevail; yet he hath prevailed, and prevailed in a lamentable manner, against many thousands of you that are Professors, and that are called the People of the Lord: And as you have been told, it is a universal Disease among you; very, yea, very few among you excepted. Therefore let every one of you faithfully and thoroughly search his and her heart; and say, *Is it I? Is it I?* And finding your selves guilty more or less, set your selves against it, as against the Plague, the bane of your Souls; and never leave using all spiritual means, until you are thoroughly purged and cleansed of it.

But guilty in a high degree ye are of it, O Houle of *Jacob*, and the Lord your Lord is highly displeased by it; and therefore chiefly, (though also for other Sins) he so hides his Face from you, as he doth. And therefore is it, that you have for a long time, even for this seven and seven years, had so little communion with him, and so little of the sweet Influences of his holy Spirit. Therefore have you been so unfruitful under the Ordinances that you have enjoyed, and do enjoy: Therefore have many of you had such cause to complain, of Deadness and Unprofitableness under the means of Grace: therefore is it that there hath been so few also that have been lately converted by the preaching of the Word, and the Ordinances practised among you, whether in Parish-Assemblies, or other Congregational Assemblies.

For how could it be expected, that you should enjoy the sweet Rays of the shining Face of your great and glorious Lord, and partake of the sweet Influences of the Grace and Love of his Heart toward you, when your Hearts were gone to another then him, when you loved Strangers, and after them you would and did go? And though you did come and bring your bodily presence into the Assemblies on the Sabbath Day, or first day of the Week, and you

came and sat before him as his People, yet your hearts, which had been all the week swallowed up in the World, would be then unavoidably also full of worldly Contrivances, and your affections then as strongly set upon worldly things, as all the week besides; and his Soul could take no pleasure in you; and you had no communion with him at all, but your hearts went after your Covetousness: And he therefore withdrew the sweet Influences of his Grace and Kindness from you, and left you to the vanity of your own Hearts, and hid his face from you, so that you could hardly have so much as a glimpse of it from week to week.

Ezek. 33.
31.

It is no wonder that the Wife is unfruitful when her Husband is withdrawn from her: It is no wonder that you have been barren and unfruitful, and that the Fruits of the Spirit have not been brought forth by you, but you have been as a barren Wilderness. Your Lord is withdrawn from you, for you have grieved his Spirit, and he could take no pleasure in you, and therefore you must needs be barren.

It is said of Believers in Christ, That they are married even to him who is raised from the dead, that they should bring forth fruit unto God. You have been married unto him, but you have left your first Husband, and are gone to other Lovers, and therefore have not brought forth Fruit unto God; neither in your particular conversations, neither yet have you been Instruments in converting others, and bearing Children unto him. The time was, when it might be said of Sion, *This and that man was born in her*. But how few have been born in Sion of late? But when you shall turn to the Lord again, and cast off with a holy indignation all other Lovers, and shall say, *I will return to my first Husband, for it was better with me then than now*; and shall be again betrothed and engaged to him, so as never to depart from him any more: Then you shall bring forth Fruit to him in another manner than you have done for these many years.

Rom. 7.4

Hos. 2.71

But in the mean time, you are hereby told what your Sin is, and what the reason of his great displeasure against you is; for which he hath corrected you again and again; even your Covetousness, your love of Money is THE Sin that you have been generally guilty of; as well those in the highest, as those in the lowest forms: And though some few Congregations or Churches, one or two, or more of you, have exalted themselves up to heaven in their own imaginations, and thought that they were excelling all others, on the account of some peculiar Principles which they hold; and have upon that account separated from all others, as not worthy to have communion with them; yet are they in respect of this Evil, and the following Evils, as vile and as wretched as others; and some among those Churches are as great Lovers of the World as others; and their Idolatries and Adulteries are as odious as others: And there is no Church in England, Scotland, or Ireland, found free, but they have all provoked the Lord their God, in a very high degree, by this great Abomination. But there are other Sins which the Lords People are guilty of also, which are to be shewn to them with a SPARE NOT: Cry aloud, SPARE NOT; shew my People their Transgressions, and the House of Jacob their Sins; are the Lords own Words.

II.
HARD-
HEART-
EDNES.
Job 42.6.

II. Another sin which is a sin of the Lords People, which is to be shewn to them that they may be ashamed, and abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes, is the sin of HARD-HEARTEDNESS, and shutting up the bowels of their Compassion from the Poor and Needy; which hath sprung from that great Root of Evil, Covetousness; which hath been justly mentioned in the first place, it being the spring and root of very much bitter Fruit: according to that word of the blessed Apostle Paul, (who was clear no doubt of that sin himself, it being plainly demonstrated in his whole course of Life) *1 Tim. 6. 10. For the love of Money is the Root of all Evil.* Hard-heartedness and close-fistedness hath been, I say, another great sin of many of the Lords people, especially of them that are rich in this world, and that have free and comfortable estates that they can call their own. I shall the more briefly speak to this sin under this head, having spoken to it in the former; as it is one proof of that great sin of Covetousness. But that this is a great and hateful sin appears thus.

John 13.
35.

Jam. 2. 8.

The great Commandment of the Gospel, is Love; and it is the great Commandment not only of the Gospel, but also of the Law; and therefore as it is called a *New Commandment*, so it is called an *Old Commandment* also: I say the great New Commandment, which also is the Old, is Love; and it is the great Character of a Gospel-Saint especially: *Hereby shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another.* Now this sin of Hard-heartedness and Close-fistedness, in them that profess to be the Disciples of Christ, and the Lords People, is a great blemish to their Profession, and a great Evidence of their Disobedience unto the Royal Law of the Gospel, unto the great Commandment of their great and glorious Lord and Master.

But this is the Sin of very many of the Lords People; and though they do obey the Lord in many other things, yet in this they do not: Though this is that great Commandment of his, that he did fervently desire to be obeyed in; and that he did so frequently inculcate again and again.

But you will say, *We do love one another, we do love the Brethren; we love them above all others, as they are Brethren, and as they are the Children of our Father; and as the Image of Jesus Christ is in them, they are very dear unto us.*

Jam. 2.
15. 16.

To which the answer is, Yea, so you do in word, and you will speak very kindly to them, and you will wish them well, and you will do kindnesses for them, if they cost you nothing. But consider what the Apostle James says; *If a Brother or Sister be naked, and destitute of daily Food, and one of you say, Depart in Peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the Body; what doth it profit? If ye speak never so kindly, and profess love, and it may be have some love to them; but if not so much as to communicate wherewith to supply their wants, what doth it profit? What doth it profit them, or what doth it profit you? Do ye think that love ye profess to have to them shall be taken notice of; if ye have Estates and have not Hearts to manifest that ye have true love, and true Bowels of Compassion, by supplying their wants? Whatever your Children need, ye have bowels to them, and supply their wants, and ye cannot but supply them because ye love them; and had you love to the poor members of Christ in necessity, you would also supply their wants; but your Hard-heartedness appears in your Close-fistedness; and therefore consider what the lovely Apo-*
file

He John speaks, 1 Job. 3. 17. But whoſo hath this Worlds good, and ſeeth his Brother hath need, and ſhutteth up his Bowels of compaſſion from him; how dwelleth the love of God in him? It is an evidence that all Bowels of Compaſſion are ſhut up, when there is a with-holding of communicating of this Worlds Good to a needy Perſon by thoſe that have it; and what will ſuch talk of Love? He that ſhutteth up the Bowels of his Compaſſion, how dwelleth the love of God in him? What evidence of it doth he give? He that loveth God, loveth the Children of God, whether ſick, or in Priſon, or in Hunger, or Nakedneſs. But what demonſtrations of it do hard-hearted Perſons give, that have this Worlds good, and ſhut up the Bowels of their compaſſion? I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thiſtly, and ye gave me no drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not; ſick and in Priſon, and ye viſited me not: How dare ye ſay ye love me, that were ſo hard-hearted?

Mat. 25.
42:43.

Of this great ſin, very many Profeſſors of Religion, of all the ſeveral Underſtandings forementioned, are very deeply guilty; though they are accounted the Lords People, and are Members of ſeveral Churches and Societies of them that fear the Lord. And their fig-leaf excuſes will not cover this ſore, nor hide it from the ſight of the Lord, whatever it do from Men.

And ſuch hard-hearted perſons as have not a heart to communicate, but lay it up either for Children, or for ſome Niece or other, may live to ſee them all buried before them, and themſelves ſoon after may have their Souls taken from them; and then what comfort will they have in the thoughts of ſuch hardneſs of Heart, and ſuch unanſwerableneſs unto the Law of God, as hath been in them?

Now the Law, as well as the Goſpel, diſcovers how diſpleaſing this Sin is in the ſight of God, and how pleaſing the contrary Vertue is unto him. And if ſuch hard-hearted Perſons have any deſire to reform, and any love to the Truth and Law of God; if they have any delight in it, let them read often, and read conſiderately theſe ſeveral Paſſages in his bleſſed Word, *Iſa. 58. 5. to 11. Jer. 22. 15, 16, 17. Iſa. 1. 16, 17, 18. Jam. 1. 27. Jam. 2. 8. Mark 6. 8. Exod. 23. 11. Levit. 19. 9, 10. Deut. 24. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. Levit. 23. 22.* In theſe three laſt mentioned places, you may ſee how the heart of the Lord our God is bent to require Tenderneſs and compaſſion in us; which is ſo plentiful and abundant in himſelf, in that though we have many other precious Precepts of this nature beſides, yet this one is repeated three times in the ſame words. And that we may ſee how well he takes works of this nature, he tells us, *Deut. 24. 13.* Do this, ſaith he, and it ſhall be Righteouſneſs unto thee before the Lord thy God. But there is but few that have deſired to be abounding in this Righteouſneſs. Compare with this place *Pſal. 112.* and *2 Cor. 9. 9, 10.* and conſider how many ſuch righteous Men and Women there be in England: Some there are, I do not doubt; but they are rare to be found. Read alſo *Iſa. 32. 8. Prov. 19. 17. Job 31. 19, 20. Ezek. 18. 7. Dan. 4. 27. Hoſ. 6. 6. Pſal. 112. 25. Mat. 5. 7. Luk. 16. 9. Rom. 12. 8. 13. and 2 Cor. 9. from 5. to 15. Heb. 13. 1, 2, 3, 16.* where we have a plentiful Teſtimony both from the Law and the Goſpel, of the bleſſedneſs of the Generous, the Liberal, the Bountiful, the Merciful Man or Woman. And to ſhew what the miſerable, the wretched, and the unhappy caſe of others are, I need mention no other place then that one, *Mat. 25. 41, 42, 43, 46.* And theſe (hard-hearted perſons) ſhall go away into everlaſting Punishment, but the

Righteous

Righteous (who have dispersed abroad, and given to the Needy) into Life eternal.

III.
O MIS-
SION
OF HO-
LY DU-
TIES.

III. Another great Sin, that those that are called the People of the Lord, the *Israel* of God, are guilty of, is the Sin of OMISSION OF HOLY DUTIES; of which Covetousness hath also been a great Root, as well as of hardness of Heart: For this hath been an evil Fruit of that bitter Root in many, where Covetousness hath been, though not in all that have been covetous: For some have been very covetous, and yet very frequent in Duties; especially some that have great Estates coming in (without a Trade) by Lands, and Interest-Money, and Bank-Money: For upon such there was no such temptation as upon others, of neglecting Duties, though they have been as covetous, as I said before, as others; it being proved, as I said before, by their Close stiffness. But this Sin of Omission of Holy Duties, I cannot say hath always sprung from Covetousness neither, though for the most part it hath.

Duties
that have
been omit-
ted, are,
1. Solemn
and con-
stant Prayer
in Fa-
milies.

Now that this hath been a great Sin of many of the Lords People, is too well known to themselves and others, And the Duties that have been sadly neglected by many of them, are these:

2. Parti-
cular in-
struction
of Chil-
dren and
others.

3. Closet-
Perfor-
mances.

4. Visit-
ing of the
poor, &c.

5. Watch-
ing over
the Souls
of others.

1. Solemn and constant Prayer in their Families, which ought to have been carefully, and with great seriousness and fervency of Spirit performed, twice a day at the least; together with spiritual Praises to God, for daily and innumerable Mercies; with some exposition dayly, or at least reading of some part of the Scriptures, for the Edification and Instruction of the Family in general: Which being done with great Fear and Reverence, in a lively spiritual manner, is comely to be seen in the Tabernacles of the Righteous, *Psal.* 118. 15. *Dan.* 6. 10. *Josh.* 24. 14. *Heb.* 12. 28. *Gen.* 13. 4. *Abraham, Joshua, Daniel and David*, did so, *Psal.* 92. 2.

2. Taking frequent opportunities particularly to instruct Children and Servants, one by one, examining the state and condition of each Soul; and applying particular Instructions, or Reproofs, or Consolations to them, as the case might require; with a zealous, and fervent, and longing desire of doing good to every Soul appertaining to the Family, or Acquaintance, or Kindred, or Neighbors, as far as any opportunity might be had.

3. Being constant at dayly Closet (as well as Family) Performances, in Prayer and Praises, in conversing with the Lord alone; it being not possible to have so much freedom to pour out a Persons own Soul-Cases, and to express his Soul-Affections to the Lord among others, as alone: and frequent private searching of, and meditating on the Law of God, the blessed Word of God, day and night.

4. The often visiting the Poor, the Fatherless, and Widows in their affliction, and the Sick and Imprisoned in their Trials and Sufferings: Wherein pure and true Religion is manifested, *Jam.* 1. 17.

5. Taking special care of the Souls of your Acquaintance (whether you were Members of particular Congregations, or nor) that you observed to be under any sinful disordered diseased frame of Spirit, in whom any sin did appear, or any carriage or conversation not becoming the Gospel, according to the Rules laid down in the blessed Word of Truth, both in the Law and Gospel: as *Lev.* 19. 17. *Mat.* 8. 15, 16. *Gal.* 6. 1.

6. That

against OMISSION OF DUTIES.

25

6. That great Duty of a constant frequenting the Assemblies of the Saints, and the practise of the publick Ordinances of Christ, which he taught all his Disciples to observe; wherein there is a more publick owning and honouring the Lord in the Eyes of all the World: Which well becomes the Saints diligently and solemnly to attend, whatever Persecution they suffer for it; (for happy are they, if they suffer for well doing, the Spirit of God and of Glory resteth upon them) which was the blessed Practice of the Saints of old; as Psal. 22. 22. & 107. 32. & 149. 1. & 122. 1, 2. & 27. 4. Heb. 10. 25. 1 Cor. 11. 18. & 14. 23. & 1 Cor. 5. 4.

Now I say, That there hath been a very great Omission of all these great Duties by the generality of Professors, is too well known to themselves and others: But I may not spare to tell them of it more particularly, and to shew them the hainousness of those Sins.

As first, That great Duty of solemn and constant Prayer in Families, being neglected, is to be charged upon many, even of the Baptized Congregations, whose looseness therein hath been very lamentable, and not only the people, but some of the Elders and Teachers of those people also, have greatly offended in this thing; and whatsoever their zeal hath been in other things, and in things never so excellent, yet in this they have been a shame and a dishonour to the high profession of the Gospel which they have made; my Soul is grieved to think of it. It having proceeded meerly from a careless, carnal, sluggish frame of Spirit, not from Opinion or Judgement that it ought to be so, or that it were against a Rule to pray and praise the Lord in their Families, or to exhort or instruct their Families; though that were very bad in them, if they did it from Opinion: but it hath not been so; for sometimes they have been practising that duty in their Families at their own leisure, and when their own turns were served. O sinful people that have thus provoked the Lord, to perform duties to God either not at all, all the day long, or else when its done sleeping (by most present) bringing the blind, & the halt to the Lord; and as these so more private and Closter performances have been very rare and seldom; as those that have lived in their Families, and observed their looseness and remissness can witness; and their own Consciences will testify to their faces. And as the Professors of the Baptized Churches, so those of the Independent and Presbyterian understandings, many of them, have been as guilty of the omission, or slight, or seldom performances of these duties as they. But for the people that are termed Quakers (by way of distinction from others) they have been wretchedly guilty of the omission of these Family and Closter Duties; it being their general way, never to pray in their Families, though many of their Families have been made up of all such as have been called Quakers; all such as have approved one of another, and could have no pretence why they should not joyn together in Prayer and praises, why they should not worship the Lord together in their Families, as well as in the greater Congregations, but only a careless, carnal, vain heart, that is the occasion of the remissness of all Professors, that are remiss in this Duty. But they have a pretence that they may not pray, but when they have a strong impulse of Spirit thereunto; and if that be the case, and that People may not pray that they may be quickened by the quickening Spirit, nor pray for more of the Spirit, when they have but a little, very little, in them; then why do they pray at all in their Meetings, or joyn in Prayer

Constant and diligent attending the Assemblies of Saints publickly to worship the Lord. 1 Pet. 4. 14

with those that do? But it may be those that pray not all the week before in their Families, will pray when they come to a Meeting. And had not the devil a great design in hindring all sorts of Professors from Prayer, they would not so easily, upon such slight and insufficient grounds, be hindred from Prayer, as they generally are. But that subtille Adversary knoweth that their Hearts shall live that seek the Lord; and that there are no Souls so thriving as the truly spiritual praying Souls, that are most in Prayer and Supplication day and night; which none are, whatever they pretend, but those that spend much time therein, both in their Families (where they fear the Lord) and in their Closets. *When thou prayest, (rectify thy self, set time apart for that purpose) enter into thy Closet, and pray to thy Father in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.* But some may say, I may pray in secret, when I neither enter into my Closet, nor none in my House observeth me. But let me tell such, That if they be observed (as they may be, when they little think of it) to spend their day from morning to night, in being plunged in some worldly business or other, or to be in company with some or other, talking of this or that News, or this and that Trade or business, for eating and drinking, and walking, and talking; and so fill up their whole day, and no time set apart, nor no retirement, or being retired from the world, and the affairs thereof; they are sorry Prayers that such make. Our dear Lord went into Desarts and Mountains to pray, set time apart for that great and solemn Work, and frequently continued all night in Prayer to God: It was not a little and slight setting apart of time. And therefore let not any dare to deceive and delude themselves and others, with deceitful pretences.

But I have a little digress, though necessarily, from my work in hand, to show the Lords People their Transgressions. But I must proceed to shew his People among the *Quakers*, that this hath been their great Sin, that they have been very grossly, and in higher degrees then others, guilty of the omission of these holy Duties, of Family and Closet-Praying, and Praising, and Worshipping the Lord, which is of so great concernment to the increase of all spiritual Grace; and that is the reason that they grow so little, but are some to a stint, and do not adde to their Faith Vertue, and to Vertue Knowledge, &c. but in the posture they were seven years ago, they are still, many of them; and are rather declined in the purity of their conversations, though they stick to their shells, and outides of needless words and gestures, in the which there is no savour to any truly spiritual taste.

Thus some of all Professors of the fear of the Lord, have been great transgressors against him, in not glorifying him as God, and worshipping him so frequently and so solemnly as they ought; but have been shamefully guilty of the neglect hereof: Though some have been more guilty then others, as their own Consciences, as well as many other Witnesses, can testify to their Faces. They have not been so exercised in Thankfulness and Praises, as they ought; nor so sensible of the multitudes of Mercies, which God hath for a long time given them; nor of his continued Mercies, which are new every morning, so as to praise him for his loving kindness every morning, and for his faithfulness every night; as *David*, *Psal.* 92. 2. & 145. 2. & 119. 164. But they have been unthankful, though Praise is comely for the Righteous, and frequent Prayer and Praises becomes the Upright.

And as they have been guilty of the Omission of Family and Cloſet-Prayer and Praiſes ; ſo many of them have been guilty too much of the neglect of inſtructing and taking pains with Children and Servants, to bring them up in the nurture and fear of the Lord ; if they have taken a little pains once in a month, or a quarter of a year, they have thought it enough ; and how many have had Servants, of whoſe Souls they have taken no care at all, or very little ? O what great reason have very many, of all diſtinctions, to take ſhame to themſelves, on this particular account alſo ?

Again, The Lords People have been very guilty, many of them, of that great evil, of the neglect of viſiting the Poor, the Fatherleſs, and Widows in their affliction, and of the Members of Chriſt in their ſick and imprifoned conditions ; ſo that it will be ſaid of many of them, *I was ſick and in Priſon, and ye viſited me not* : and of this evil they have been generally guilty, except ſome of them here and there ; but ſome of them have been ſo guilty hereof, through the love of this World, as they could very ſcarcely find time once in a quarter of a year, to viſit any poor Soul in their Diſtreſs, or Sclaviſhneſs, or Poverty, or Imprifonment ; though ſome have been of the ſame Congregation of which they have been : as thinking that the Viſits that ſome others make, may excuſe them ; or whether others viſit ſuch or no, it is all one to them ; this Worlds Buſineſs hath been their Work, and their Delight ; perform ſuch Duties who will, they have not been careful. This hath been the ſhameful evil of ſome, both *Presbyterian, Baptiſed, and Independant* Profeſſors : but the People called *Quakers* may not be ſo much charged with this evil, as many of the others may be ; there being generally a more forwardneſs and readineſs in them to this Duty, then in others : And though it is a Duty, that an out-ſide Profeſſor may perform, yet it is a Duty well becoming the moſt eminent Saint.

But further, The Lords People have alſo been very guilty of that Sin, of neglect of a tender and careful watching over the Souls of one another, when any one hath been overtaken with a fault ; and of not endeavouring to reſtore ſuch a one with the ſpirit of meekneſs ; but have ſuffered Sin upon others, and have not been concerned about it ; and have not taken that natural care of the welfare of each others Souls, as they ought to have done ; this being the Duty of all Saints, but eſpecially of the Elders and Teachers of a People. But of this Sin many have been guilty ; but the Elders and Preachers of the *Presbyterian* Congregations eſpecially have been very deficient herein, for which they ought to be deeply humbled, for they moſt of them have been very negligent herein : as if it were enough for them to preach two or three Sermons a week, in a publick Congregation to all Comers : and they have done little elſe, in order to the Soul-advantage of the People, whom they have judged to be committed to their Charge ; never going to viſit them that hear them, and to be enquiring into the ſtate of their Souls, and inſtructing them more particularly in the things that belong to their Peace : nor yet to endeavour with the Spirit of Meekneſs to reſtore any of them that have been over-taken with a fault, and that are guilty of particular Evils, which becomes not their Profeſſion. But they content themſelves with a ſluggiſh negligence of theſe things, as if nothing elſe were to be done in order to the welfare of the Souls of the Flock, the Sheep and Lambs of Chriſt, but merely a bare preaching once a week, as ſome do no more ; or two or three times a week, in a general way, to all Comers.

Gal. 6. 1.
Lev. 17.
17.

A Trumpet sounding

Of this, I say, the Preachers of the Presbyterian Congregations are most guilty; but yet some of the Teachers and Elders of the Independent, and of the Baptised Congregations also, as is well known, are as guilty hereof almost, if not altogether, as any of these, and therefore such may be joyned together: And they must all know, That these are the Shepherds with whom the Lord is greatly displeased, of whom he makes that great Complaint, *Ezek. 34. 3. 4. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed the sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost, &c.* which alas, alas, hath been your very Character.

How many of your Flock have been diseased, weak and feeble Souls? And what care have you taken to strengthen them, by administering such particular Applications unto their particular Cases, as might make them to be strong Men?

How many of your Flock have been sick of grievous Diseases; either of filthy Coverousness, or of dangerous Pride, or of disturbing passionate peevishness, and frowardness of spirit, upon every small occasion, or of desperate Unbelief? &c. And what care have ye taken to heal these and such-like sore Diseases of the Souls of your Flock, by those blessed Prescriptions of the Word of God, which you ought skilfully to have administered to each of them, Remedies suitable to their several Maladies, as the matter might require; skilfully dividing the Word aright, with a spirit of Meekness, Sweetness, and Love, and yet with a holy Courage and Resolution not to spare Rebukes with all Authority in Love?

How many in your Flock have had broken Bones, by reason of distress of Spirit, that ye have not bound up? And how many of your Flock have been driven away, by falling into company with persons that have led them astray, or by a propensity in their natures to run into loose and vain company, and to go astray from the Footsteps of the Flock of Christ? And ye have not brought again that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost: if they be driven away, they may be driven far enough for you, some of you, who never go to seek their stragling Souls, by going to their Houses to endeavour their Return, not once in twelve months; but if they be lost, lost they may be for you; especially if they be some of the Poor of the Flock, if mean in the World: and they may wander from Mountain to Hill, and be devoured of wild Beasts; for you have neither cared to seek that which was lost; nor to bring again that which was driven away, nor to heal the Sick, &c. And WO BE TO YOU, ye Shepherds of Israel, saith the Lord, *Ezek. 34. 2.* that do not the work of a Shepherd, but take care to feed your selves, and cloath your selves; and if that be done, whether you have it of the Sheep, or any other way, you are satisfied: though you do not those Offices of Shepherds of the Flock; as those that should watch for their Souls; as those that must give an account of them to God: O how sad an account have ye to make for these things!

These Sins of your Omissions unto whom so great a Charge is committed, have been very great provocations of the Eyes of his Glory, of whose blessed Service you have been so negligent; and you must be told of it with a SPARE NOT.

Again, As this hath been the Sin of Prophets and Teachers; so it hath been the

the Sin of others also, even of many of all distinctions, *Presbyterians* and *Quakers*, &c. for it is the concern of all that fear the Lord, to endeavour the Reclaiming and Recovery of any that are fallen or overtaken with a fault, and to endeavour the restoring of them with the spirit of Meekness. But this hath been a general Sin among very many, viz the Omission of this Duty. It is true, that many Professors are not gifted for such a Work, as to others are, but every one ought to be found performing it, according to their capacity, as need requires; and neglect of the discharge hereof, in any of the Lords People, hath been their sin, which the Lord will have them humbled for.

But the great Sin among the Sins of Omission of the Lords People, is, the Sin of Omission of the constant attending of the Assemblies of the Saints in all times wherein that Assembly, whereunto a person appertains, doth appoint any solemn Assembly for the publick worshipping the Lord together, & waiting on the Lord to see his goings in the Sanctuary, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire into his Temple: For the Lord is pleased to declare (*Rev. i. 13, 20*) that his presence is in the midst of the Churches, in the Assemblies of his Saints; and there his people may inquire, may seek after, may find, and obtain the Knowledge of the great Mysteries of his Gospel and Kingdom, and there the spiritual Eye may behold his Beauty. And if some cannot see any Beauty there, it is because their Eyes are blinded: But every spiritual Eye may and doth behold in some measure the Beauty of the Lord in his Temple, in his Churches. But the reason why those that are truly spiritual see but a little, is because there is a great defection in the very best of the Churches, and most of the Elders of the Churches have their blots, and some in particular are very foul ones, (as hath been said, and may appear before this discourse be ended, it being to shew the Lords People their Transgressions, and the Churches, and the Elders of the Churches, their Sins.) But though there be a very great defection and backsliding in the Churches, and the very Elders of the Churches, to their shame; yet there the Beauty of the Lord is to be seen, if any where upon Earth, though it be very much beclouded. But though there be but a little Light, yet some Light, and some spiritual Beauty there is among many Churches and Congregations of Saints; and let particular Souls know, that then they shall know, if they follow on to know the Lord: And he that improves a little well, shall gain much more. The diligent hand maketh rich; and blessed are they that sow beside all Waters. Blessed are they that improve all opportunities in publick and private, to search for the Knowledge of the Glory of the Lord, as for Silver, and dig for it, as for hid Treasures: In all places or means in which there is any ground to expect the obtaining of that blessed Treasure.

But this hath been the Sin of the House of *Jacob*, (or those that pretend to be of that House, viz. of the *Israel* of God) That they have greatly neglected, not only other Duties, in the performance whereof they might have been blessed; but also this great Duty, of attending the Assemblies of the Saints, wherein in an especial manner they ought to be diligent: For in the Assemblies of the Saints, God is most evidently and visibly honoured, and glorified by his People in the Eyes of the World: And the more they have been opposed, the more ought his Saints to be diligent in giving up themselves by a faithful obedience unto his Precepts, in the observance of all his Ordinances and appointments, blamelessly, purely, and not according to mens inventions:

for

Hos. 6. 3.

Prov. 10.

4.

Isa. 32. 20.

Prov. 2. 4.

A Trumpet sounding

for in vain do they worship him, that teach for Doctrine the Precepts of men. But instead of waiting on the Lord in the Assemblies of his Saints, in former times, wherein the Lords People enjoyed Prosperity, and as much Liberty as they could desire; they, many of them, followed the World, and the Profits thereof; and others, for missing occasions, neglected their Duties, when it was not for matter of Gain unto them, but meerly from a sluggish, dull, dead frame of Spirit, and Indifferency in the Lords Service. And when Churches have appointed solemn days of waiting upon the Lord, in solemn Assemblies, besides the Sabbath, or first day of the Week, there have been slender appearances of them of all Distinctions; Even of some of the *Baptised Churches* (I say not all of the *Baptised Churches*, but some) are very guilty hereof also; and it is too well known to them, that their solemn Assemblies being appointed, have been slightly observed weekly (in the week Days) yea, many times when days of Fasting and Prayer, and days of Thanksgiving have been appointed upon solemn occasions, they have been unworthily neglected by many Church-Members, and by some Elders also; some affording but half the day to the Lord, and some no part at all. O unworthy People! Was the Lord a barren Wilderness unto you, or a Land of Darknes? Was there no pleasure to be found in waiting upon him? Was he no more delightful to your Soul, then a Land of Darknes, which is very unpleasant to the Body? Was he so to your Souls? Was there no more in him, then in a barren heathy Wilderness? Who can chuse but have his heart rise against the unworthy doings of such a People, as have by their Actions seemed to manifest no more regard unto the great and glorious Lord of Heaven and Earth, the blessed Fountain of all manner of Loveliness, Beauty, Sweetness, and transcendent Goodness, then unto a barren Wilderness, or a Land of Darknes, into which no man desires to enter? Do not such a People deserve to be cast into utter Darknes? Yet such a People have you been, O House of *Jacob*, and ye that are called by the Name of *Israel*, many of you, that have restrained and abstained from coming unto the House of the Lord, unto the Assemblies of the Saints, unto the Place where his Honour dwelleth, upon every trivial and slight occasion, and sometimes upon no occasion at all. What reason have you to blush, and be ashamed of these things, that not onely, as hath been said, neglect the waiting upon the Lord in private, but also in public! Wherein it is more visible to the World, how slightly you serve the Lord, and how little you prize an Opportunity of Worshipping him. His, blessed Servant David could say, *Psal. 122. 1. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord: Our Feet shall stand within thy Gates, O Jerusalem.* And, Lord, I have loved the Habitation of thy House, and the Place where thine Honour dwelleth. But what do many of you say? You draw back, and keep off, when you should go to the House of the Lord. You prefer your Shops before it, going to *Blackwell-Hall* before it, going to the *Custom-House*, going to receive money on Bills of Exchange, going aboard Ships, any paltry business before it. O foolish People, and unwise! Do you not consider that Word, *Deut. 28. 47, 48. Because thou wouldst not serve the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, in the enjoyment of the abundance of all things: therefore shalt thou serve thine Enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things, and he shall put a Yoke of Iron upon thy Neck, &c.* Did you not neglect the service of the Lord

Psal. 26. 8

Lord, in the last twelve years in which you had a full liberty, and a fulness of all things that a people could desire; and therein in a high degree provoked the Lord to deprive you both of your liberty and of your fulness of riches together, whereof some of you have been deprived to purpose? And since you have been deprived of that liberty you then had; have you not greatly neglected the Service of the Lord still? (though it may be, there is a little Reformation among some of you, though but a little) And do you not provoke him yet more to anger, by your negligent attending his Courts, and the place where his Honour dwelleth? So that you give him cause to deprive you both of all that liberty and plenty that yet he vouchsafeth to you, or any of you, and to make you meer Servants, and slaves to your enemies, even to Forreigners, which seem to be preparing to come against you.

But I shall not (in shewing you this publick sin, viz. the sin of the Omission of the publick Worship of God) mention more particularly then I have, who are more or less guilty of this evil: It is so visible and manifest to all of all sorts, that I need say no more, to shew those of the Lords People that have been guilty hereof, that this is their sin in particular. But let them, all of them, that have been guilty hereof, know, that the Lord takes it very unkindly at their hands; and let them consider those complainings of his against a negligent People, that do neglect the frequent and solemn waiting upon him in holy Services, *Jer. 2. 31, 32.* and what expostulations he there uses with them, *Have I been a barren Wilderness unto Israel, a Land of Darknes? Wherefore say my People, We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee? Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire? Yet my people have forgotten me, dayes without number.* What can ye answer to these words? Was the Lord a Wilderness unto you, or a Land of Darknes? You can make no answer to this, but what will return shame and confusion of Faces upon you. What can you say to your Actions, in which you have said, *We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee?* Hath not your careless and indifferent waiting upon the Lord, manifested that you thought you were Lords your selves, and independent upon the Lord, and had no need of waiting on him, or praying or addressing to him, or observing his Rules or his Commands; but you were able to stand upon your own Legs, and therefore would walk by your own Rules? (Poor miserable Worms!) And how many dayes have you past over your heads, when God hath been in all your thoughts? but you have forgotten him, dayes without number. The Heart of a young Girl hath been much more upon her Ornaments, and of a Bride on her Attire, then yours hath been on your God. A Child hath more minded its daily Ornaments (especially a Girl) then you have your daily solemn waiting on your God; for which cause that word may be justly taken up, *Ezek. 19. 14.* This is a Lamentation, and shall be for a Lamentation. And O that it may be bitterly lamented by the Lords People indeed!

But of this Sin, I must say that there are some here and there of the Lords People (whom I do know, though it may be but one of a thousand) that are very clear of it, in the generality of the course of their lives, that may (it may be) be compared with *David*, and *Abraham*, and *Daniel*, and *Paul*, in their diligent and constant waiting upon the Lord, (whom their Soul loveth) both in publick and private, Worshipping of him; and with *Moses*, and *Aaron*, and *Samuel*, among them that call upon his Name.

IV.
COVE-
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ING.

IV: Another great evil in some of the Lords People, is that great and hainous Sin of the BREACH OF COVENANTS, or Oaths solemnly taken and entered into; wherein many of them have very much dishonoured the Name of the Lord, though it may be it is a Sin that they are not so sensible of as they should be.

There was a Solemn League or Covenant entered into about twenty two years since. But the Deeds of them that did wittingly, and willingly break any part of that Covenant, when it was in their power to have performed it, were a very great dishonour to the Name of God, whose People they profess themselves to be that were then swaying persons in the Parliament and Army. And wherever their specious pretences were for their so doing, by which pretences they deceived themselves, and blinded the eyes of many simple honest people; yet their sin therein was very great, and they did thereby give great occasions unto the enemies of the Lord, to blaspheme; and the Name of God was thereby prophaned abroad in the World.

The entering into that Solemn Covenant, was not a thing done in a Corner, but was such a Publick and Solemn Act, as was made manifest to all the Nations in Europe, whose eyes were then gazing upon us, and observing of us; and the entering into that Covenant was greatly cryed up, as a most worthy Act, that might conduce much to the happiness of those Nations, had it been inviolably kept to the utmost of every mans capacity.

But when a Nation shall solemnly enter into a Covenant, with hands lifted up to God, as if they desired his Blessings and Favours, no otherwise then as they performed, and faithfully kept it to the utmost of their capacitie, and then perfidiously in a few years shall wittingly, willingly, and resolutely break some great and considerable parts of it, in the sight of God, Angels, and Men; and yet profess to be the People of the Lord, and the Children of God; How greatly do they dishonour his Glorious Name? whose People ought to be Children that will not lie, much less break a Solemn Covenant; of whose Servant it is said, *Psal. 119. 4. That he sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.* And it well becomes him so to do: for it were better for him to chuse affliction rather then sin; to suffer prejudice, and loss, and great disadvantage, then in any measure to break his Promise, much less his Oath; For what if he lose outward things? God is able to make up that a hundred fold to him again. But if he sin against the Lord, Who shall intreat for him?

But this Sin of false Swearing, or breach of an Oath is a great and horrible sin; which, as it greatly dishonours the Name of the Lord, doth greatly provoke the Eyes of his Glory, as appears.

Because it is evident in Scripture that the Lord doth very severely punish his people for that sin, that have been guilty of it; bringing dreadful judgments upon them for that sin in particular, as is evident in *Ezek. 17.* The King of *Babylon* having come up against *Jerusalem*, and taken away the King thereof, and carried him to *Babylon*; he being one of the Sons of *Josiah*, and having set up a Brother of his to be King of *Judah*, in the stead of him that he carried away to *Babylon*; he made him whom he set up to be King, to enter into a Covenant of Subjection unto him: But instead of keeping his Covenant, he rebelled against the King of *Babylon*, as you have the History, *2 Chron. 36. 10, 11, 12, 13. & 2 Kings 24. 17, 18, 19. & Jer. 37.*

the

against COVENANT-BREAKING.

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the whole Chapter. And sent to Egypt for help ; But saith the Lord, *Ezek. 17. 15, 16. Shall he escape that doth such things ? or shall he break the Covenant and be delivered ? As I live, saith the Lord God, surely, in the place where the King dwelleth that made him King, whose Oath he despised, and whose Covenant he brake ; even with him, in the midst of Babylon shall he die. Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty Army make for him in the War, ----- Seeing he despised the Oath, by breaking the Covenant ; when loe, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely, my Oath that he hath despised, and my Covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompence upon his own head, and I will spread my Net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespasss that he hath trespassed against me, and all his fugitives, with all his bands, shall fall by the sword ; and they that remain shall be scattered toward all Winds : And ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken it.*

Here we see, when the King of Judah had sworn to the King of Babylon, though it may be he might think himself not bound to keep Covenant with him, being a Heathen and an Idolater : and though it may be, when he took the Covenant, he took it unwillingly ; yet having taken it, he was indispensibly bound to perform and keep it. For if the consideration of the quality of the Persons, whether Heathens, or Turks, or Atheists, should null the Covenants or Promises that are made by the People of the Lord to them ; then the Name of the Lord would be greatly blasphemed amongst the Heathen by such Deeds : for it would justly open the mouths of such to say, That there is no Truth nor Righteousness amongst such as profess to be the Lords Servants. For among all sorts of men in the World, Truth and Faithfulness in Promises and Covenants, and Just and Righteous Dealings among Men, is highly esteemed, and the contrary condemned ; much more among the People of the God of Truth (for Just and Right is He) therefore if any such do break a Covenant, a solemn Oath, Gods more dishonoured by them then 4: by others ; and he will not bear with it in them, but usually doth severely punish it, as in this King : *Therefore, saith the Lord, Shall he escape that doth such things ? Shall he break the Covenant and be delivered ? He shall not escape, he shall be carried captive, and he shall die in Babylon ; seeing he despised the Oath, by breaking the Covenant. And accordingly he was carried to Babylon, and all his Sons were there slain before his Eyes, and then his Eyes were put out, and he was blind to the day of his death.*

And it is much to be observed, That the Lord calls the Covenant that this King entered into, HIS Oath, and HIS Covenant : *Thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely MY Oath that he hath despised, and MY Covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompence upon his own Head.* For we find in Scripture that the entering into a Covenant or Oath, is a great and solemn Appointment of the Lord, for the ending of Controversie, and for the confirming of Truth ; and therefore it is called in Scripture, *The Oath of the LORD,* as *Exod. 22. 10, 11. If a man deliver unto his Neighbour an Ass, or an Ox, or a Sheep, or any Beast, to keep, and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it ; then shall an OATH OF THE LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his Neighbours Goods, and the Owner of it shall accept thereof, &c. And 2 Sam. 21. 7. But the King spared Mephibosheth, the Son*

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Jer. 39 6,

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Heb 6. 16

A Trumpet sounding

of Jonathan, the Son of Saul; because of the **LORDS OATH** that was between them; between David and Jonathan the Son of Saul: The like Eccles. 8. 2. And so here: As I live, saith the Lord, surely **MY Oath** that he hath despised, and **MY Covenant** that he hath broken, even it will I recompence upon his own head.

And it is plain, that in an Oath or Covenant, the Party doth in word or gesture, call the Lord to witness to the Truth of it; either by Hands lifted up to Heaven, or by kissing the Book of the Scriptures, which is the Word of God; or by saying, **SO HELP ME GOD**. So that it is properly called, *The Oath of the Lord*, because the Lord is solemnly owned as a Witness to it, and it is a dreadful thing to break it.

Another Scripture that manifests the dreadfulnes and the horribleness of the evil of the Breach of an Oath, is that in 2 Sam. 21. where it is plain, that whatewer the Persons are to whom it is made; though Heathens, and though a man be drawn into that Covenant by Flatteries, or by the deceitful words of the person or persons that drew him into it; that yet he is indispensibly bound to perform it; and the breach of it is a great Provocation of the Lord. For it is there said, That there was a Famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody House, because he slew the Gibeonites*. Now we know how that by deceit and guile the Gibeonites had drawn Joshua, and the Elders of the Children of Israel, to swear to them that they would not destroy them. So that the Gibeonites, though they were Idolaters, and of the sinful Nations that the Lord would have destroyed; yet they had that fence of the weight, and reverence, and strength, and force of an Oath, solemnly taken by the Lords People, that they knew it would not be broken by them; and accordingly it proved unto them: for though they had obtained this Oath by deceit and guile; yet the Princes of the Children of Israel would not recede or go back from it, nor break it in killing of the Gibeonites, but said, (Josh. 9. 20.) *Let them live still, lest Wrath be upon us, BECAUSE OF THE OATH which we swore unto them*.

Here the fear of the Lord was upon the Children of Israel, when the power of the Lord, and his Goodness had been much display'd unto them, in making them Conquerours over their Enemies, when they were newly come into the Land of Canaan. (O that it had been so upon others that have broken Covenants!) But Saul, wicked King Saul, made no bones of destroying the Gibeonites, though it was contrary to an Oath that the Elders of the Children of Israel had solemnly sworn to the Gibeonites. But the Lord would not bear this Sin in him, but being hereby greatly provoked, he sends a Judgment upon Israel for this, even three years Famine, until seven of Saul's Sons were cut off for this Sin of Saul. So greatly is the Lord provoked by those that do break a solemn Oath or Covenant.

How greatly therefore doth it concern those that have been actually guilty of the breach of any Oath they have taken, or any Covenant, or any part of a Covenant they have entered into, to whomsoever they have sworn it, though it should be to Unbelievers and Infidels, that they greatly humble themselves for their so doing, and repent unfeignedly of it, and resolve for the future to perform all the Oaths and Covenants they have taken, to the utmost of their Ability; I say, to the utmost of their Ability, for God requires no more of any?

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And it is certain that it was not in the power of some to hinder others from the breach of that Covenant which they had generally taken : For in the great Breaches of the Solemn League and Covenant that have been made, it was not in the power of men in a private capacity to hinder them. It being carried on by them that were the Ruling Power of the Nation at that time ; but as many as did protest against it at that time, did well ; and for those that did not, they ought greatly to bewail it : And though they were deceived and blinded by the subtle devices that were then used to put a fair colour upon those Actions by which the Covenant was broken ; so that many good People in but a common capacity, were ignorantly led to acquiesce in what was done by those that were above them : Yet they ought now sincerely to repent of what they did then ignorantly. To that end, let them consider how greatly the Lord hath been dishonoured by his Peoples breach of Covenant. The Nations abroad that had their Eyes upon us, might blush to behold that People that so eminently professed to be the People of the Lord, should so grossly and palpably break so solemn an Oath : And what occasions of stumbling hath been given to them thereby, and occasion to Enemies of blaspheming the Name of the Lord ? In which respect this breach of Oaths has been a great Sin of some of the Lords People.

But though it hath been the Sin of some, yet I cannot say that it hath been the Sin of all ; and they may have Peace that have been kept clear from the breach of any Oath, or any part of an Oath.

But I say, It greatly concerns those that have been guilty of this Sin, unfeignedly to repent of it : And though I mention no particulars of the breach of Oaths, yet it concerns every one to consider their ways, and whereinsoever they have not kept to the utmost of their ability, any part of that Oath, or any other Oath they have taken, to repent thereof ; whether it hath been done through ignorance, or careless indifferency, or any other way : for it is a dreadful thing to break a Covenant, and a Sin that brings the Judgments of God upon a People, that are wittingly and knowingly guilty of it ; and sometimes upon a whole Nation, though it be but the Sin of some of the Nation ; as appears by the instances already given.

Now it is much to be desired that the Lord would please to help all his People that have been any way guilty hereof, to lay it indeed to heart, and truly to repent of it, setting time apart to acknowledge it, and to be humbled for it before the Lord, with full purpose of heart to do no more so wickedly ; that if it may be, the great Judgments of God that are already upon us, and that may be coming on us, may be diverted, and the Plague may be stayed in all parts of the Land.

I mention this Sin, as a great Sin of the Lords People, because though it be but the Sin of some, yet it is such a Sin as for which God hath brought Judgments upon a whole Nation ; though but a few of the Nation have been guilty of it.

And because it is a Sin which brings so great a blemish on true Religion, when some of the Professors of it shall be guilty thereof : as witness that dung that was (by reason of the guiltiness of some Professors, of this Sin) spread upon the Profession of Religion, by *George Wharton*, in his Almanack for the year 1660. in his Verses for the Month of *June* that year. His words are these :

A Trumpet sounding

*But 'tis the Mode: Come, come, let's all comply;
There's no firm footing on Integrity:
For, having said and done all what we can,
The pliant Willow is the Precious Man;
Whose Oaths of one day (though of fair pretext)
Vail to an Inspiration of the next.*

And it is well known what great occasion there had been then given to him and others, to belch out such Reproaches as these; though this ought not to have been fastened upon all the Lords People, there being many thousands of them, that do abhor that Maxime, *That Integrity is no firm ground*. This Principle being firmly riv'd in the Souls of the Lords dear Servants, That Integrity and Sincerity, and plain Dealing, without any hypocrisie or complements, is the most blessed Path that any People or single Person can walk in.

And it is well known, that there are thousands that cannot be as the Willow, bowed to comply with what men will bow them to; No, but they will rather break then bow: And several blessed Servants of the Lord have chosen rather to be broken, then to bow; to lose their precious Lives, then to comply unworthily with any thing that may tend to the Dishonour of the Lord Jesus Christ, their glorious Lord and King.

It is not the pliant Willow, the bowing complying Man, that is the precious Man; but such a one is a degenerate Plant of a strange Vine; and it is not his Preciousness but his Baseness that is thereby discovered.

And there are also many thousands, who having taken an Oath or Covenant, dare not renounce it, notwithstanding all the most subtle charming Inspirations of the highest Episcopal, or Archiepiscopal strain imaginable: But rather then vail to the Promises or Threatnings of the most advanced Hierarchy, of whose Promotions they might soon have a share, they will chuse with *Moses*, to suffer Affliction, though it should continue all the days of their lives, rather then to enjoy the Pleasures of *Sinful Compliance* for a season.

But it must be acknowledged, that though there be many thousands that never bowed the Knee to *Baal*, that never did nor never would comply to take any Oath but such as they truly and conscionably intended to keep: yet so it was, that there were some who had the Name of being the Lords People, who then were in Power and Authority, who did very unworthily turn and wind, like the Weather-Cock, and comply basely with some things afterward, which were contrary to a former Oath which they had taken; and these gave the occasions of such Reproaches and Blasphemies to be cast upon others, and caused the way of Truth to be evil spoken of.

But who ever they were that did it, and were the chief Ring-leaders in it, though they were and are never so eminent, and never so excellent in all respects, and cried not in one point but this; yea, though they were as dear to the Lord as *Moses* and *Aaron*, and though it may be he hath forgiven, and will forgive their Iniquity, yet he hath taken, and may take Vengeance on their

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Inventions, because they have not so honoured the Lord before all People, as they should have done, in an inviolable observance of his blessed Precepts, in a faithful keeping Oaths or Covenants, though it should have been to their own loss or detriment: For the Righteous Man sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

V. Another great Sin which some of the Lords People have been guilty of, is, P R I D E, and Haughtiness of Spirit. Though it may be there is but few of them that have a full sence of their guilt of this evil. For it must be acknowledged that this evil doth not appear in the generality of them, as it doth in some others; who out of Pride and Haughtiness of Spirit, if they be persons of Estate, will scorn and despise the Company of them that are poor and mean in the World; or scorn that such a one should go before them, or such a one should take the Wall of them, or sit above them in Feasts, or in the Church-Meetings: I say there are few or none of the Lords People, whose Pride works in such gross and palpable things as these are.

V. PRIDE.

But notwithstanding it is evident, that too many are very guilty of that abominable Sin, Pride; and one clear proof of it is this: That many of them are very unable to bear Reproof one of another, when any evil or weakness hath appeared in them, for which they are justly reproveable; having taken that to be a slighting and an undervaluing of them. So that though it hath not been intended by the Reprover, yet it hath been so interpreted by the Reproved.

But it is apparent, that inability in persons to bear things of this nature, discovers Pride: for an humble man, that is truly low, and little in his own eyes, and is not at all puffed up, can with all contentedness and patience bear Reproof, whether it be justly or unjustly administered; because another person cannot have meaner thoughts of him, then he hath of himself; and having mean thoughts of himself, it is rather pleasing then displeasing to him, that others see how mean and weak, and unworthy a person he is, rather desiring to be set in a low place in their thoughts, then to be high; as judging himself not worthy any high esteem in the thoughts of any; considering how unworthy he is in himself before the Lord; and how unworthily he hath carried himself (in many respects) to the Lord; and how he deserves at the hand of the Lord, rather to be despised and trampled upon by the worst of men, then to have any esteem among men; and therefore if he be despised, and counted poor and mean, it is but as he deserves to be, because he is but a polluted lump of Dust and Ashes, as he is in himself.

And this we find hath been the way of the most eminent Saints and Servants of the Lord, when they have had nearest Communion with God, and have seen themselves in the clearest Light of the Spirit: As the Prophet *Isaiah*, when his Eyes had seen the King, the Lord of Hosts, having the clearest Vision of the Lord, then he most clearly saw his own undone Condition, and saw himself to be a man of unclean Lips, *Isa. 6. 5*. How many of the Lords People would be very little, and very vile, in their own Eyes, had they clearer Visions of the Glory of God, and more intimate Communion with him? But it is an argument of the very great darkness, and weakness, and meanness of that Christian, that hath not a very true and real sense of his own poverty, and vileness, and unworthiness. When faithful *Abraham* stood be-

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A Trumpet sounding

fore the Lord, he was truly sensible of his own unworthiness, being but Dust and Ashes, *Gen. 18. 27.* And blessed *Job*, when he had seen the dearest Vision of the Lord, then most abhors himself in the sense of his own Vileness, *Job 42. 5, 6.* *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes.*

And as it is always so with particular persons, when they know most, and see Truth with the most spiritual Eye, then they have always the greatest abhorrency of themselves, in the truest sense of their own vileness: so it will be with the whole Church of Christ, when God shall in the latter days discover his Glory, (which *Isaiah* and others have had some Glymψes of) most clearly, and most perspicuously; as he will then reveal it, as *Isa. 35. 2.* *Jer. 31. 14.* *Isa. 40. 5.* and many other places shew. Then, when his whole *Sion* shall be filled with the discoveries of the Goodness, the Grace, the Kindness, the pardoning Mercies of the Lord: When all their Inquiries are pardoned, and all that dwell in *Sion* shall be forgiven their Iniquity, Then shall they be most humble, and most abhorring themselves for their own vileness: as, *Ezek. 16. 62, 63.* *And I will establish my Covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou mayst remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more; because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.* And the like, *Ezek. 36. 31.* where the Lord having declared what great things he would do for them, it is said, *Then shall ye remember your own Evil Ways, and your Doings that were not good, and shall loath yourselves in your own sight for your Iniquities, and for your Abominations:*

But those persons are far from abhorring themselves in the sense of their vileness, and from taking shame and confusion of faces to themselves, that are greatly needed and offended at any reproof of another, that judgeth he seeth some Evil in a man that he ought to reprove him for. What doth this argue, but that such a person is puffed up, and hath a high esteem of himself, as if he could not erre; and would not have any to think he doth erre, nor to have any mean thought of him, because he hath no mean thoughts of himself? What doth this argue, but Pride, and thinking more highly of himself than he ought to think; that ought to be poor and needy, mean and unworthy in his own esteem continually?

But for a person to fret and fume, to be offended and highly displeased and to gather up all the Fig-Leaves that possibly he can, to cover his shame, and not ingeniously to acknowledge it to the very utmost circumstance of it, as for as he is guilty; doth discover a very proud and unworthy spirit. And of this sin very many of the Lords People are too guilty. But I cannot charge it upon any one Distinction or Understanding of them, more then upon others, some of each being very sadly guilty of it.

But for an humble Soul, that's truly humble indeed, no Reproofs for Evil can offend it, whether they be justly or unjustly administered to him: for he will say, *Let the Righteous smite me, and it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, and it shall be an excellent Oyl, which shall not break my Head:* And will say to such, Blessed be you of the Lord, for your faithfulness to me; and though it may be, I do not see this Evil in my self so clearly as you do, yet it may be you may see what I do not; and I desire to search my heart thoroughly in this matter, for it is apt to deceive me; and I know I am a poor vile Worm,

and

and I desire to be more sensible of my own vileness and unworthiness, then you can be ; and I desire from my Soul to be cleansed from this evil, and I desire your Prayers that I may be so, and may be fully convinced of it, and may repent in Dust and Ashes ; and blessed be God that hath given this blessed Precept to his People, to reprove for Sin : They that hate their Brother in their Heart will not do this kind Office : But this is an Act of Love to my Soul, and I highly prize it ; for the Love of this kind is better then other Love that may be in the Heart, but cometh not forth into Act ; therefore *open Rebuke is better then secret Love* : And I desire always to be thus dealt with, that I may judge my self, and condemn my self, that I may not be condemned with the World.

Lev. 19. 17

Prov. 27.

5.

1 Cor. 11.

31 32.

Thus the humble Soul will be so far from being offended at Reproof, as it will with thankfulness receive the sharpest Reproof you can administer unto him.

But when a person cannot bear Reproof, whether it be justly or unjustly administered to him, let him conclude that any unkindly bearing of Reproof, springs from Pride ; (not that a man ought not at any time to endeavour to clear himself, when he is not at all guilty of an Evil, if upon a mistake, or mis-apprehension, he be charged with it) for if a man be wholly guiltless of that evil that he is charged with, yet if first he cannot with all meekness and sweetness return an answer to his Brother or Sister that reproves him, but storms and is offended, he is proud, and cannot endure that any should have mean thoughts of him ; and though he may be guiltless in this ; yet in some other respects, it may be he is ten times worse then they charge him with : Or secondly, if he do make a soft answer, yet if he have a secret grudge in his heart against that Brother, and heart-rising thoughts, and cannot as truly and tenderly respect him as ever he did, and as one that hath done him a very kind and friendly office, he is proud ; for nothing but a haughty spirit will move him to disrespect him, for speaking that to him that may tend any way to his abasing : for a truly humble Soul desires always to be abased in its own Eyes, and is not troubled if it be abased in the Eyes of others, as knowing it cannot be more abased then it deserves to be.

But that too many of them that are called the House of Jacob and Israel, and that profess to be nearer to God then others, have been deeply guilty of this sort of proud spirit, hath been too evident and apparent : Their proud spirits and high stomachs that must come down, and their haughtiness that must be humbled, being visible to many, when there have been Reproofs administered to them ; and of this both *Presbyterians, Quakers, Baptised, and Independants*, (some of them all) are to be charged.

Another thing wherein some of them all have also been guilty of Pride, is, their being lifted up because of Gods holy Mountain ; and each of them despising and undervaluing others, because they thought they in particular were Gods holy Mountain.

As the *Baptised Churches* have, many Members of them, (if not most of them) been ready to censure and judge all others, as being none of Christs, but those that were in their way, and they only were *Sion*, they only were the *Israel* of God ; and those that come in to them, they come to *Sion*, they * only being the Churches of Christ.

And how came you to attain to an infallibility and none but you ?

And the *Quakers* arising after them, they swell high in their apprehensions, and

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and they despise and contemn the Baptised Churches, and account them to be as mean, and low, and poor People, and as eronious, and as much out of the way, as any others, and as much in *Babylon*; and the *Presbyterians*, *Independants*, and *Baptised*, are all alike with them, and all out of the way; and they † onely are Gods holy Mountain, and the Kingdom of Christ is onely among them, and all others are out of that Kingdom.

And the *Presbyterians* they boast of their way, an † that they * onely are the Church of Christ, and all others are Hereticks and Schismaticks, and deluded persons, and none of the *Israel* of God, but are *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, and *Edomites*, and *Canaanites*, and are to be destroyed.

And the *Independants*, they judge that they are in a righter way than any others, and that all others are in Errors and in darkness in many things, and that they † onely are the true Churches of Christ.

Thus each of them glory in Gods holy Mountain being among them, and not among others: Each of them saying of themselves in particular, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we*: lifting up themselves onely, and slighting all others, as not worthy to be compared with them. But this is from their Pride, for else they would humbly conclude, and say, Surely the Grace of God shines as much in some of these, as in any of us, and we are not better then others; but they may be better then we, and may be more dear to the Lord then we; for though we walk in that way, which (as we judge) is most agreeable to Truth, (as it is to be hoped all of them do, or else they would not walk in it) yet we dare not conclude we are better then others: (for Truth is not revealed to any man for his Goodness, but of meer Grace) for we are poor unworthy wretched sinful Men, and have manifold Weaknesses among us; for which we deserve to be set in the lowest Rank: and it is certain that many of them that differ from us, do out-shine us in Holiness, and more of the Glory of God appears upon some of them, then on most of us: They are more cloathed with Humility; they have the Robes of Righteousness about them; they have the Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit shining in them; they have, some of them, the Spirit of Love in power in them; and have Hearts enlarged to good Works: in all which most of us come short. And therefore though we think we have more Light and Knowledge in some things, yet if they have more power, it is an argument that the Grace of Christ is more in their hearts, and consequently they are dearer to him then most of us: And therefore far be it from us to despise them, or to say they are not as truly the Subjects and Servants of Christ as we; seeing we differ not in our Judgements about the Power of Godliness, but about some part of the Form, in which the Lord may so enlighten us all, as we may be also all of one mind, when we are once brought to love and honour each other truly and intirely; and notwithstanding our difference, we do all come to the perfect praise of that blessed Rule, *Rom 12.10. Be ye kindly affectioned one to another, with Brotherly Love, in honour preferring one another.*

But the contrary to this, appearing in all Distinctions, discovers their great Pride and Haughtiness, so far as they persist in it, whether *Presbyterians*, *Quakers*, *Independants*, or *Anabaptists*.

But first all these several Understandings are not hereby justified, as if one of them were not in respect of the plain Scripture-Rules more nearer to the praise of the primitive Churches, then all the other three are; for of that
these

There is no question : for one of the four must be the most near, though they may come much short of the Primitive Times.

Secondly, Nor is it hereby intended that Persons ought to be doubtful of the way they walk in ; but they ought to walk in the way that they are perswaded in their own minds is nearest the Rule ; and though it may prove in the day of Decision to be furthest from the Rule of all the rest, yet ought a man to cleave to that way, unil he is otherwise perswaded ; as appears, *Rom. 14. 5, 22, 23.* And,

Thirdly, It must be acknowledged, that it is not what our Judgement at present is, but what the Lords Judgement will appear to be, that shall determine the question in his time, which of them all is nearest the Rule ; and although a man know nothing by himself, but that he walks nearest the Rule of all the rest ; yet is he not always hereby justified before God, though he is hereby justified in his own Conscience. But,

Fourthly, All that is hereby aimed at, is that no one should think of himself more highly then he ought to think, but to think soberly ; that is, as often to think of his own imperfections in many things, as of his supposed and believed Perfections in that point of coming nearest the Rule in forms, that to he may be kept from being puffed up, and from insulting over others, who notwithstanding their darkness in some things, may be as dear to Christ as himself ; that to he may not be haughty, because of Gods Holy Mountain.

And the Lord tells his People, *Zeph 3. 11.* that the time shall come when this shall not be : But, *The Day shall come, saith the Lord, in which I will take away out of the midst of thee, them that rejoyce in thy Pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy Mountain.*

Another Demonstration of that horrible Sin of Pride, to be in many of the Lords People, is their aptness to Passion, Frowardness and Contention ; but that is also another of their great Evils, which I shall now come to declare unto them, which will also further discover the odiousness of their Pride.

VI. Another Sin in the Lords People, of which too many of them are very guilty, is their being so propense unto hasty Frowardness, Passion, Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, Evil speaking, and Malice ; the apparent Fruits of the Flesh, and Works of the Devil.

VI.
PASSIO
NATE
WRATH

That this is the Sin of too many of the Lords People, is too well known : for many of them do frequently, up on very slender occasions, break out into such disturbing Passions, as do very much disturb their own spirits, and put them out of tune for any good service for God or man ; besides the disturbance and trouble they make in the Family, at least in the spirit of the person against whom the offence is taken, whether justly or unjustly : And these sudden passions, and heats, and that anger, whether against one or more persons, seldom goeth alone, without Bitterness, and heart-rising, and a kind of malice against the Party or Parties : For when that Evil One hath kindled that fire, he bloweth it up to the utmost he can : for all this kind of heat and disturbance of spirit that appears in any, is that which is set on fire of Hell, for it never comes from Heaven.

Jam 3. 6.
14, 15, 16
17, 18.

But, *The Wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits,* *Jam. 3. 17.* And this is

Mat. 11.
29.

the bleſſed Rule that our Lord himſelf gives us; *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Spirit, and ye ſhall find reſt to your Souls*: And his meekneſs and lowlineſs was ſuch, as he was leſs as a Lambs dumb before the Shearers, and opened not his mouth; and when he was reviled, he reviled not again. This is the bleſſed Pattern that we ought to follow: and whoſoever profeſſes to be related to him, and that Jeſus Chriſt dwelleth in him, as he doth dwell in perſons except they be Reprobates; I ſay, he that ſaith Jeſus Chriſt dwells in him, and he abideth in Chriſt, he ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk as he walked, 1 John 2.6. And therefore ſaith James, *Who is a wiſe man, and endued with Knowledge? Let him ſhew out of a good Converſation his Works, with meekneſs of Wiſdom.*

Jam. 3.13

But where is the meekneſs of Chriſt manifeſted, when ſmall matters in trivial things, ſuch as would not at all move or diſturb Men or Women of no Principles or Profeſſion at all, ſhall ſet a Profeſſor into ſuch an unkindly heat, as ſhall multiply words of Contention, and make meer vain People that are about them, to account them very unlovely Perſons to live with, and to be a burden to them.

This hath been found in ſome Servants, Men and Women Servants, that have been Profeſſors, and Members of Churches, (ſome of them) that are ſo paſt with Pride, and conceitedneſs of themſelves, either for their abilities for Service, or for their Knowledge, and their Privileges, in that they are profeſſing Perſons, and therefore think themſelves far above others, better than their fellow-Servants, better than their Maſters and Miſtreſſes; and have had ſuch high conceits of themſelves, as if all others were inferior unto them: and therefore every word that is ſpoken to them, or every action they are put upon, that they think is an unſerving to them, or a ſlighting of them, they cannot bear, but fly out into heats and diſcontents, and unſober carriages; ſo that thoſe that are about them, whether Equals or Superiours; know not how to ſpeak to them, they are of ſuch unmeek and impatient ſpirits: and if a word of Reproof or Diſlike, wherein they deſerve Reproof, or deſerve it not, be ſpoken to them, they are of ſuch hot and high ſpirits, as they will give ten words for one; making no conſcience at all of obſerving that Rule, Tit. 2.19. where Servants are required to do faithful Service in all things, and not to be answering again: But as if this were no Rule at all, or were not worthy to be minded, they will in their heat, and pride, and paſſion, multiply words of contention, to the burdening and diſturbance thoſe that have to do with them, as if they were like the troubled Sea, which cannot reſt, whoſe Waters caſt up mire and dirt; and ſuch prove a great blot and ſhame to their Profeſſion, and cauſe Profeſſors in general to be evil ſpoken of, many times; and make the hearts of People to be offended with Religion it ſelf, if they have not good knowledge of other Profeſſors, that are of a better ſpirit.

And as there are ſuch Servants, ſo there are Maſters and Miſtreſſes, and Huſbands and Wives, that are very guilty of this hateful Evil; and therefore ſome Miſtreſſes, and ſome Maſters alſo, that have high and ſwelling thoughts of themſelves, either as they are or would be thought to be ſome-body in the World above others; or as they have a high eſteem of themſelves for their Place, or Birth, or Degree, or Quality, or for their Knowledge, and Parts, or for their being long Profeſſors of Religion, or for the Abilities they have above

above others, in spiritual Things : for one or more of these Reasons , or for no Reason rather, being puffed up, they cannot bear, or endure with any patience, any Word or Action, that tends, as they think, to their undervaluing ; from Neighbours or Relations, or Acquaintance, or Servants ; but fly out into great heats, and passions, and discontentes, to the great disturbance of themselves or others ; and those fires are not easily quenched. And if it were not for Pride, they would never be blown up : for that is a true word, *Prov. 13. 10. Only by Pride cometh Contention ; but with the well-advised is Wisdom.* But many impatient Men and Women do not think they are proud, But will say, It is my hasty nature, and my cholerick temper of Body that causeth me to transgress, and to be apt to be soon angry ; for which I am afterwards troubled : but they little consider that that passionate nature cometh from a proud nature, from a self-loving and self-conceited disposition, that is as natural to them as their Choler. But let them consider this Word, *that saith, Only by Pride cometh Contention.* And then consider what it is to be proud, and what it is to be humble.

First, To be Proud, is to think a mans self to be Rich, in something or other, to be Good, to be Worthy, to be Deserving, and that he ought to be honoured.

Now for a poor Man, or Woman, or Child, that's come to understanding, to think themselves to be better than others, and to entertain thoughts that they are persons of Worth, that they must be esteemed, and ought to be honoured ; is a Character of a proud person. And this wretched, unworthy, base, vile nature, we shall have some to manifest more then others, by their Actions and Carriages from their Childhood ; whether they or their Parents have little or much of the World ; whether they are Rich or Poor, or whether they have Wisdom, Parts, and Abilities, or not ; are Wise or Fools : for a proud Heart is as well under a Beggars Cloak, many times, as under a Lords ; and in a Fools Brest, as in a Wise Mans. Now to be proud, is for a man to think himself somebody, to be better then others ; whether there be seeming reason for it, or not. I say whether there seem to be reason for it or not : for to have the Riches of this World, to be born to great Estates, to come of (that which is called) great Parentage ; or to have great Beauty and Comeliness of Person, or great Wisdom, Understanding, Parts and Abilities in things Natural or Spiritual ; are no just Reasons why any of the Children of Men should think they are Worthy, or Rich, or Honourable, or they are better then others. And though they seem to be good Reasons to the purblind, dark Souls of many Men ; yet they are but seeming Reasons.

But this is the Character of a proud man, Whether he have seeming Reason for it, or not, yet he will think himself to be Worthy, to be Good, to be deserving of Honour and Esteem.

But on the other hand : To be Humble, is for a Person to have mean and low thoughts of himself, to be little in his own Eyes ; to esteem himself to be (as he is) a poor worthless, empty, naked, needy, impotent Creature, to be wretched, miserable, blind and naked ; and to have a constant deep sense of it on his heart.

The former of these grows in Natures Garden, viz. Pride, though not in all alike ; it is much more abounding in some from their Childhood, then in others : but in all there is the Seeds, and some Sprigs (too many Sprigs) of it.

A Trumpet sounding

But the latter, viz. Humility, and truly to have such mean and such low thoughts of self as we ought to have, is a Lesson and a Disposition of Spirit that is taught, and wrought in the Heart by the Spirit of God alone. The Seeds of which are sometimes sown, and grow up betimes in some Souls; and sometimes are hardly to be sown, and it is long before they grow up in some Souls; and bring forth that Fruit unto perfection that will make them happy.

I say, to bring some Souls to be truly humbled, truly little in their own eyes, and truly to be sensible of their own poverty, and unworthyness, is a difficult work: and though some Seeds of it be sown, and some Sprigs do sometimes grow up, and they have true Humility in a measure, in a small degree, yet the Old mans Fruit groweth up again, and is not so rooted out, but that it does afterwards make sad Work in some Souls, and that very frequently.

But further, A proud man, as I said, hath high thoughts of himself, and thinketh he hath Worth, and that he is Rich, and Full, and increased with Goods, and that he ought to be esteemed, and accounted of, and revered by others. And a humble man hath truly mean thoughts of himself; and, as I said, thinks himself a poor, mean, miserable Creature in himself; a poor, blind, naked, unworthy, sinful, polluted, miserable Worm, that deserves nothing from the hand of God, but to be trampled upon by the worst of Men: And therefore if any affront him, or trample upon him, it is but what he hath deserved, and what is fit for him. And if any slight him, he knowing what a poor Worm he truly is, what a pitiful poor Creature he knows himself to be; the slights of others do never trouble him: But he loves to be low, and little in his own Eyes, indeed and in truth, and therefore cannot be offended if any have little esteem of him; for they cannot have meaner thoughts of him, then he hath of himself: for he is ready to abhor himself, and loath himself, when he considers not onely his own nakedness and poverty, but his own sinfulness.

This is the humble man, this is the man that is poor in spirit; truly poor and little in his own Eyes, in his own Spirit; and hath not high thoughts of himself. But if he behold any Grace of God displayed to and in him, or any Gifts, he rejoices with trembling, and hath still never a whit the less sense of his own unworthiness & meanness. But glories onely in Gods Goodness, acknowledging heartily that by the Grace of God he is what he is.

1 Cor. 13.
10.

Now having thus in part seen what it is to be a proud man, and what it is to be an humble man, Let that word be considered, *Onely by Pride cometh Contention*. Is any man offended at any time? Doth he break out into heats or passion? Whence cometh it? Is it because any one hath affronted him, or slighted him? If he cannot bear that, it comes from Pride. Were he truly humble, he would bear all manner of slights, as knowing his own pitiful poor mean condition, and that none can think him to be a more mean and worthless Creature then indeed he is.

But says one, *I am a Servant, and I can do such and such business well, and I am so and so qualified: I have such and such Parts, and I would not be slighted.*

Ans. But admit thou art so and so qualified, yet thou art to acknowledge that it is of Grace that thou art what thou art; and still to keep such a true sense

sence of thy unworthiness, as to think it no wrong to thee to be slighted; and thy Gifts of an internal or external nature, will shine in thee never a whit the less, but much the more, for thy patient and willing suffering thy self to be slighted, in the sense of thy own unworthiness: but thy Humility will therein appear, which will bring thee to more honour.

Prov. 15: 33.

But saith another, *I am a Master or Mistress, and it is not to be born, to suffer the slights of a Servant, and of Inferiours.*

Answe. Admit thou art a Superiour, and hast many outward Enjoyments above others; yet thou oughtest still to keep such a sense of thy unworthiness and vileness, as to acknowledge that it is great Grace that God hath given thee any of these things, and to think it no wrong to thee to be slighted, though by Servants: (Though it may be the Sin of them that do it; for Servants ought to be subject to their Masters and Mistresses; *Hagar, Sarah's maid*, was required to do so; and all Servants, by the Rules of the Gospel, are required to do so; and it is their sin if they do not so: and they will receive a Reward of the Lord Christ, if they do so, *Col. 3. 22, 23, 24, 25. Gen. 16. 8, 9.*) And thou oughtest with all meekness and satisfaction to bear it: and if thou wert in a true humble frame indeed, it would rather gratifie thee then displease thee, it would be so suitable to thy own thoughts that thou wouldest have of thy self. And though thy Servant should slight thee, thou art a Master or a Mistress notwithstanding; and all thy other Endowments, and Gifts, and Parts, and Abilities, are notwithstanding; and none of the Privileges that God hath given thee of his own Grace, will be eclipsed by thy meek and patient bearing and forbearing, but rather shine the more; and God will be the more glorified in thee, and in them. But the contrary argues great Pride, as if thou hadst very high thoughts of thy self, and wert not any way sensible of thine own vileness, and filthiness, and unworthiness, when many times thou art offended, and breakest out into passion, because thy business is not done, or not well done, or done as thou wouldest have it; this comes from Pride: For hadst thou not high thoughts of thy self, and wert thou not swollen and puffed up, so as to think thou art some body; and thou oughtest to have thy will done, and thy business done, and thy orders observed in every particular of them; thou wouldest not be so offended, if sometimes thou wert disappointed of having thy will and pleasure; but wouldest rather think sometimes, *What am I? Who am I?* that I should expect such continual exact observance of my will? I am a poor unworthy Creature; and though my Will be crost, or I am disappointed of my expectation, whether through the sinful wilfulness, carelessness or perverseness of my Servant, or through their infirmity, or weakness and debility for such Services; or through any accidental occasion, yet I ought patiently to bear it, considering how unworthy I am of having my Will, or my Work, or my Business done, and admire Grace, that I have any thing that is satisfactory or comfortable to me, being such a sinful polluted vile Worm as I am, having so often and so greatly rebelled against GOD.

But another may say, *I being a Master or Mistress, am offended and angry sometimes, because my Servants are not so careful as they should in keeping my House clean, or being clean about dressing Food, and clean in ordering Cloaths for wearing, which I love; and love the more, because Cleanness is a shadow of Purity, and is a thing the Spirit of God in the Scripture commends, as Eccles. 9. 8.*

And

And clean Cloaths, and a clean House, and clean Vessels for use, are very desirable things, and I love to have things so, and cannot endure the contrary.

Ans. Though it be true, that these are very desirable things, and such Servants are to be most desired, as have these qualities; yet this justifies not any Master or Mistress that have Servants cast upon them (by the Providence of God) that are not so, if they be passionate or froward. In such a case reproof may be given, and a dislike may be shewn of such things; if it be done in such a way as doth neither move nor disturb the person reproving, nor the person reproved; nor raise any unkindly heats or heart-risings in either, but so, as the party reproved may see that they are not despised, though their miscarriage is disliked; may see that the party reproving, hath respect to them, notwithstanding the dislike of the offence; and may see that the party that reproves them can bear with a fault with much meekness and patience. For though Uncleanliness be of the greatest abhorrency to a Master or Mistress, of any outward thing, yet it is but the crossing their will; and if it be that which a Servant is not a Lover of, or be so habited in the contrary, as they cannot conform to that cleanliness that is desired; yet that also which is most averse to our natures, ought we to bear patiently, (when we cannot avoid it) and to consider that our Passion or Impatience cannot reform it, but rather strengthen it; and that if we cannot bear things that are contrary to our pleasures and earnest desires, this doth manifest that we have not such a due sense of our own unworthiness, are not so humble, so slowly in heart, as we ought to be, we being such unworthy Creatures as deserve nothing that is desirable or comfortable to us; and therefore should bear contentedly those things which are most irksome to our natures, and acknowledge that we might justly be deprived also of all the other Mercies that we enjoy. And, *Only by Pride cometh Contention*, in this Case also. And they are poor proud Worms, puffed and swollen with Dust and Ashes, that contend about any outward things that are of self-concernment, and cannot meekly and patiently persuade and reason only with persons offending, without passion or discontent, in all such cases as are our own outward concernments.

I do not hereby condemn persons that endeavour to have such desirable things as are lawful and warrantable in themselves, as these things are. But that which is condemned, is the impatient bearing the crossing of our desires in those lawful things. We may desire them, and endeavour to procure them:

But if one Servant be not of a cleanly temper, we ought patiently to bear that, until we can fairly put off one, and take another; and use any good and just means to obtain those desirable things. But in the mean time, consider, that as no hair of our head can fall to the ground without the Lords Providence, much more may it be said, That no Servant can come into a mans service, without the Lords Providence; and it may be appointed of him as a punishment of the iniquity of such a Master or Mistress; and ought patiently to be born of meek and humble Persons.

2 Sam. 16. Remember what David said of Shimei, *It may be the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David; who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And so do you say.*

And if one Servant be displeasing to you, bear that; and if another be so, bear that, until the Lord shall direct you to a better. But if you have never
so

so many disappointments of that kind, it must still be born, acknowledging always that he punishes us less than our Iniquities deserve.

EZEK 9. 13

The like may be said of any Discontents, or Passions, or Heats that may arise between Husbands and Wives, and Brethren and Sisters, and Neighbours, and fellow-Servants; they all proceed from Pride: Either because one Party cannot bear an Offence, which had he Humility he would bear. Or the other party cannot endure to be charged with a fault; whereas had he humility, he would sweetly receive Reproof, whether he was guilty or not guilty, as was said before, pag. 39. I say the cause of all Passions and Contentions, arise from want of Humility in the one party or the other, or in both: But sometimes it arises but from the one party; as for Example; If a man be proud, he is apt to take offences, though he have to do with persons that are never so humble, and never so meek. Because sometimes, through such forgetfulness as the most careful person may be subject to, there may be offences taken: As if a Servant or a Friend have forgotten to do what was expected, and what was fit to be done; a proud person (that thinks he ought to have every thing that he desires, and cannot be content to have his Will cross in any thing) will be forward and impatient, though it were not possible for the Party to do the thing, having forgotten it.

And again, A proud person, that is puffed up with apprehensions of his own worth, will expect such and such observances from Neighbours, and from Relations, which a humble person never minds; and if the persons be never so meek that such a man hath to do with, it is not possible but Contentions and Passions will break out in the proud Person, because the meek Person with whom he hath to do, never knoweth to the full, what such a man expects. Now he is offended because he is not observed in such a thing, and then in another thing; even in such things as a humble meek man would never be offended at. Or if he did not like such or such a Carriage, yet a meek man would either forget it, and take no notice of it, as a thing not worth speaking of; or else would speak with such meekness, and such soft words as should manifest no heat in his own spirit, nor be any trouble to the party spoken to.

And a meek man would be far from carrying it sullenly two or three days, saying nothing at all, and harbouring discontent, like fire, in his bosom so long, and then break out into a flame. I say a humble meek man would be far from such an ill temper: for of the two, the angry or passionate man, who is suddenly heated, and then speaks his discontented mind as suddenly; and when it is spoken, is as friendly as if he never spake it; is a far better temper than this Man.

But the man that being offended, calmly and meekly delivers his mind, without any heat, in a sweet way, manifesting still love and kindness to the party, notwithstanding the offence, and that suffereth long, and is kind; he is more excellent than his Neighbour.

PROV. 12.
26.

But a proud man, through his Pride, is very apt to take offence at small matters, petty things, which none can prevent: And what is said of a proud Man, may be said of a proud Woman also.

But sometimes Discontents and Passions arise from Pride in both parties: The one, through Pride, cannot bear an offence great or small; and the other, through Pride, cannot bear his discontented words; nor bear any offence

offence from the other, though never so small : And small matters, through the Pride of each, proving offensive to both, there is amongst such persons much frowardness, and many unkindly hearts.

Gal. 6.2. But where two persons are, and both are humble and meek, they will bear one anothers burthens and so fulfil the law of Christ. And if the one forget such a thing, or such a thing, that the other would be glad to have done; that shall never displease the other, but he is ready to wink at it, and pass it by with only, I wish you had done it, or I pray remember and do it to morrow, or when you have don such a thing : and I intreat you not to neglect it, unless some great occasion hinder you : and if it be neglected again, he can forgive it again, and again, and again ; and it is the glory of that man that passeth over a transgression : and he manifesteth true love, that can cover a multitude of offences. Gospel love in a man beareth with many things that are in themselves irksome to him, and endureth many things that are displeasing to him, and suffereth many things that are grievous to him, yea suffereth such things long and yet is kind ; he hath no unkindness in his heart, no rancor, no grudge, but is truly kind still, tenderly, dearly, fervently loving to his friend still.

Pro. 19. 11.

Pro. 10. 11

1 Cor. 13. 4

5, 7.

This was the glory of a man under the Law, and is the glory and honour of a man under the Gospel, to indure and bear, not only some, but all things, all offences against our selves : and though they be a multitude, love will cover them all, and humility will account them small, and meekness will let them fall, and never hold them up in contention. Thus it will be between Neighbours, and Acquaintance, and Husbands, and Wives, and Brethren, and Sisters, and fellow-Servants, where humility love and meekness are.

But by Pride cometh Contention. Pride is the great root of Contention. And though it may be observed sometimes, that men that are covetous do often break out into passion, when any thing is done that proves to the loss of any part of their Wealth, and their Covetousness seems to be the Root of that passion, yet still it is plain that Pride is in the bottom ; for why are men covetous, but because they are proud, and do love the Honour and Glory of the World, and cannot bear to be crost in it, being not truly humble ? They love Wealth and outward Greatness, and cannot endure to be brought low.

Thus it is clear that this is a true Word, *Onely by Pride cometh Contention.*

Now that of these two odious and abominable Sins, Pride and Passion, many of the Lords People are guilty, is too apparent, and too well known : Though yet there are among the Lords People, many that are, according to the Apostles Exhortations, clothed with Humility, and adorned with the Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, and are very beautiful and lovely therein. I say there are many of these, both Men and Women, both *Presbyterians, Baptised, Independants, and Quakers.* But (O that it were not so !) there are as many, if not more, among all these several Professions, that are deeply guilty of Pride and Passion, and that have by those hateful Evils of theirs, among others, provoked the Lord our God to bring upon us one Judgement after another ; *and his anger is not yet turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.* O that the hearts of all his People were washed from all their wickedness ! When shall it once be ?

Isa. 9. 17.

VII. Another

VII. Another great Evil which the Lords People have been guilty of, is, The fore Evil of their Unbrotherly, Unchristianly, and Unworthy Deportments one towards another, on the account of their differing in Judgements one from another. The Lord having dispensed Light and Knowledge variously to his People, to some he gives one degree of Light; to others, other degrees: And they, because they have not all the same Understanding, and the same Knowledge, do therefore slight one another, and despise one another; and like foolish Children have such Heart-risings one against another, as to say they are not their Fathers Children; and do deny them that their Father will own: upon a great Presumption that the one party (whether *Presbyterians*, *Baptised*, *Independants*, or *Quakers*) hath all true Light and Understanding unfolded in their Breast; and that they for their part are complete in Knowledge, and do not erie in any one particular of their Judgement; but their Understanding, and their Way onely is the Truth; and all others are in so great Errors, as they cannot be the Children of God that do not own and practise what they understand and practise.

And this hath been the Way of those that are called *Presbyterians*, and therefore they have preached and prayed against, and uttered many bitter Invectives against the *Independants*, *Baptised*, and *Quakers*, as holding gross Errors, gross Deceits, altogether out of the Way of God; and rendring them as Enemies of God, and such as were to be opposed, and imprisoned, and banished, and if hang'd, it were good enough for them; and if they were even cut off that troubled the *Presbyterians*, it were but righteous in their account: So little of the Spirit of God appeared in them, and so little Love had they to all that differed from them, and so ill thoughts did they harbour of them.

And on the other hand, it hath been a frequent thing for the *Baptised*, the *Quakers*, and *Independants*, to judge the *Presbyterians* to be Antichristian, and to be in *Babylon*, in an Antichristian Way, as being such as the Lord would never own.

And yet it is to be hoped, that by this time they are convinced on all hands in a good measure, that they did erie, in so judging and speaking one of another. For the *Baptised People*, and the rest, do now see that there is a spirit of Integrity, and of the true Fear of the Lord, among them that are called *Presbyterians*; and that they cannot by the Temptations of this World, nor yet by the Threats of it, be drawn to comply with things against their Light, to keep their Benefices, as they judged they would: for many of those that had hard thoughts of the *Presbyterians*, judged that those that were Preachers among the *Presbyterians*, preached onely for Hire, and for Reward; and that if their far Benefices were taken away, their work would be ended. But they do now see that it is not so, but that they can and do preach, though there be no Tythes nor Rates put into their mouths; and that they can be content, as well as *Independant* and *Baptised* Preachers, and *Quakers*, to do their Lords Work, and trust him to engage the Hearts of their Hearers to administer to them supplies for their Livelihoods: And though it be not so much as formerly, yet it may be it doth them more good, and is more comfortable to them than their former Incomes were, that were by Tythes, &c. And it may be seen also, that those Impositions that came from *Rome*, even from the

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A Trumpet sounding

Babylonian Crew, are not submitted to by the *Presbyterians*; but that they desire such a Reformation in all things, as is most agreeable to the Word of God, and not according to the Decrees, Canons, and Constitutions of Men. I say, these things the *Baptised, Independants, and Quakers*, can now see in the *Presbyterians*, and can bless the Lord for it.

Again on the other hand, The *Presbyterians* do now see, that it is not a great Error for the Lords People to meet in private Houses, there to worship God, and preach and hear the Word, as the Primitive Saints did; seeing that liberty of Worshipping God according to the Enlightnings of their Understandings and Consciences, is not to be had in the Parish Steeplehouses, which some do call Churches.

And by this time they are all convinced that they all believe in, and worship one God the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things; and that they are all made Partakers of the same Spirit of Truth, that dispenseth his Gifts, and Graces, and Teachings to them all variously, dispensing to every one severally as he will; and that his Wind bloweth where it listeth.

And they can rejoice in the Grace of God that is dispensed to them all, inhabiting them, or any particular person of them, to bear witness unto the Truth: Some by suffering Imprisonments, or Confiscations, and deprivements of outward things, or Banishments, or Death. And they can all rejoice in that Christ is exalted by any, who do preach up, and witness to this Truth, That Jesus Christ is the only Lawgiver in his Church, and the only King and Head of his Church; and that his Laws and Rules only are to be obeyed and practised in his Church; and that no men ought to set up their posts by his Posts: and that every Servant of the Lord ought to worship him so as they are persuaded in their own mind, is most agreeable to his Word and his Rules; and not according to the Understandings and Prescriptions of others, but according to that direction, *Rom. 14. 15, 23. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.* Persuaded of what? Even that the Way in which he worships God, is according to his Word and Laws, and not according to the Words and Laws of men, as knowing that *whatsoever is not of Faith, is sin.*

And they all can rejoice in this, That that one Spirit in them all, presseth all to Holiness, and Purity of Heart and Life; so that out of doubt, there are many of all these that now can lie down at the Feet one of another, to do one another good, though in some things they differ in their Understandings as much now as ever they did: And they have now learned to be more afraid of Judging, and Censuring, and Condemning one another, lest they should be judged of Christ for so doing.

But though we may hope that it is thus now with many of the Lords People; yet it is most undeniable, that the generality of the Lords People have greatly sinned against him in their sinful Deportments one towards another; in taking up evil surmises one of another, and endeavouring to compel one another to their own Understandings, and also manifesting such an unworthy spirit, as that if any one party had prevailed, to have absolute Dominion over all the rest, it was more then probable they would have used some severity to constrain the rest to conform to their Understandings.

This was known to be that which the *Presbyterians* did greatly seek for.

And

against UNBROTHERLY BEHAVIOUR.

51

And it was too manifest by the words and actions of the *Baptised, Quakers, and Independants*, that they would have gone far in the same Path †, which was a very unworthy disposition in whomsoever it was : for if it be a very grievous thing, a very injurious thing for any to compel the *Presbyterians* to do that which is against their Consciences in the Worship of God, it is the same in any other.

But this hath greatly displeased the Lord, that any should be compelled and constrained to do any thing in his Service or Worship, which they saw not his Word and Rule for.

He is thy Lord, and worship thou him : He is not thy Lord, if thou observe not his Rules, and his Commands and Directions, but the Commands and the Rules of Men. *In vain do ye worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of men.*

But in that the Lords People have a Disposition to impose their own Understandings one upon another, and in that though they have not had that full power to do, which they desired ; yet have they manifested a persecuting spirit one against another, merely and onely for differences in Understanding, by reproachful speeches, which they have given out one of another, and by taking up Evil Reports one of another, and manifesting no Brotherly Love one to another ; but carrying it one to another as if they were not Children of one Father. I say in that the Lords People have done thus, they have provoked the Lord to scourge them all, and to spare none of them. And they must know that as far as they remain thus disposed, he is greatly offended with them.

Not that the Lords People ought not at all to judge one another : for there are many things that we may judge and censure one another for ; as when persons are overtaken in faults or evils that are against plain Rules ; such Rules as are acknowledged by all that acknowledge and believe in the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent ; as to be a Liar, to steal, to cheat, to deceive, to swear falsely, to commit adultery, to be malicious, or envious, or proud, or covetous, or impatient, or froward, or to be scornful, are evils acknowledged by all that truly believe in the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, to be against plain Rules received and acknowledged by them all ; and when we see a Brother overtaken in any of these or the like faults, we are to judge and condemn them as the Works of Darkness, and the Fruits of the Flesh ; and to endeavour to restore them that are guilty of them, and to have no fellowship with them in such unfruitful Works of Darkness.

And accordingly the *Independants*, the *Baptised*, the *Quakers*, and the *Presbyterians*, do all bear witness, and that justly, against these and such-like Evils, whether they are in any of their own Understandings, or in any others.

And this kind of judging one another, the Lord both commands and commends : He commands it in these Scriptures, *Lev. 19. 17. Psal. 94. 16. Mar. 18. 15, 16, 17. Ephes. 5. 11.* And the Lord commends it in the Church of *Ephesus*, *Rev. 2. 2. I know thy works, &c, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil.* That spirit of zeal that was in them against evil in any, in that they would not bear nor suffer sin in any, was very acceptable to him.

And therefore in such cases we may and ought to judge of the Ways and

† Though not to that height as the Presbyterians desired to do.

Psal. 45. 11. Mat. 23. 9.

* Witness Mr. Edwards Gangrene

A Trumpet sounding

Spirits of men, and to condemn the carnal minde, and sinful disposition of spirit, and the sinful ways of men: for if a man be disobedient to that which he knoweth to be the Will of his Lord, we ought to judge and condemn him therein.

But that which we are forbidden to judge one another for, is the things in which we cannot be of one mind, but do differ in our Understandings: For though we may be perswaded that the Way wherein we walk is the very Way which the Word of God directs us to walk in, yet we ought not to say that therein we are infallible: And though we are all to walk in those things wherein we differ, every one as we are perswaded in our own minds, and should erre therein; yet we may not be judged to be none of the Lords Servants or People: For they onely may be said to be none of his, that wilfully rebell against his known Will, and continue in so doing, without Repentance.

But there being this testimony in the Conscience of a man, that with his whole Soul he desires and endeavours to do the will of God from the heart, and that he doth not knowingly erre in one tittle from the Law of our Lord Jesus Christ, but it grieves and troubles him: for to censure or judge such a one to be none of the Lords, is that which the Lord forbids.

But it may be said, That some Quakers do not acknowledge the true God, nor Jesus Christ our Lord, whom he hath sent.

To that the answer is easie: If they be such to our own knowledge, as do deny the true God, and Jesus Christ our Lord, whom he hath sent; as do not own him nor his Law: nor profess an unfeigned subjection to him in all things, so far as they know his Will; Then they are not to be owned as the Lords Servants, but to be accounted as Heathens and Infidels. But if they do profess Faith in God, and in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; and if the true Fear of the Lord be in them, and they do manifest a subjection unto the Laws and Rules of the Lord Christ, in all things, so far as they know his Will, although they are very differing from us in many other things not so generally received by all the Lords People; yet he that censures or judges them as Enemies of the Lord, or condemns them as none of his, may offend the Lord Christ.

Now as far as the Lords People have been censorious one of another, and condemned one another as none of his; so far they have greatly grieved his holy Spirit in walking contrary unto the blessed Rules of his Word, in which he sweetly instructs his People, thus:

Joh. 13. 35

1 Cor. 13. 5

Rom. 12.

10.

Heb. 13. 1.

Rom. 14.

2, 3, 4, 5,

9, 10, 12,

13, 23.

Hereby shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another. And, Love thinketh no Evil. And, Be kindly affectioned one towards another, with Brotherly Love, in honour preferring one another. And, Let Brotherly Love continue. And in another place, thus: For one believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth Herbs: Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another mans Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall he holden up, for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike: Let every man be fully perswaded in his own mind.----- To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy Brother? Or why dost thou set at naught thy Brother?

Brother? We shall all stand before the Judgement-seat of Christ.----So that every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more.----And, Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin. And, Judge not, that ye be not judged.----And, Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy Brothers Eye, and considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye?

Mat. 7. 1
3, 4.

But very many of the Lords People have greatly sinned against him, in not observing these blessed Instructions, but they have cast them all behind their back, as if they were of no concernment to them to observe. But they have rebelled against the Lord, and rejected the Word and Wisdom of the Lord herein. And though he say, Judge not that ye be not judged: And, Let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him: And, Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? For to his own Master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand. Yet they have taken upon them to be Judges of the Spirits and Ways of the Lords Servants, in that wherein they have differed from them; and have taken upon them, some of them, to censure one another to be the Devils Servants. But herein, viz. in censuring one another for things in dispute among them, have the Servants of the Lord boldly violated these blessed Rules given us by our Lord Christ himself, and by his Spirit in Paul; and have peremptorily taken upon them to judge the Servants of their Lord, who takes it as a high indignity offered to himself, that any poor Worm of the Children of Men, (who must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and every one give an account of himself to God) should take upon them to judge, before the time they have given an account of themselves. For what poor dark ignorant foolish insufficient Creatures are we, to do that before the time, that Christ both died; and rose, and revived, that he might obtain, viz. To be Lord and Judge of all, both Quick and Dead? Can we search the Heart, and try the Reins? Can we say we are of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, and are able to judge not after the sight of the Eye, neither reprove after the hearing of the Ears, but with Righteousness? &c. How presumptuous are they then that judge their Lords Servants? How gross an affront do they offer him in it? Will they say that such and such an one, that differs from them, is in such an Error as is the path of Destruction, when it is said, He shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand; stand firmly upon the Rock of Ages, though he differ from them in many particulars? How greatly therefore doth it concern us, with blessed Paul, to say, Let us not therefore judge one another any more?

1/a. 13.
3.

Seeing this Precept is so often inculcated in the blessed Scriptures of truth; the Wisdom of God fore-seeing our aptness to sin against Christ herein: Though we have sinned grievously against him in so doing in time past, yet henceforth let us not judge one another any more.

But further, Let it be known to the House of Jacob, That they have rebelled against the Lord Christ, in that though he say, This is my Commandment, That ye love one another, that ye may be thereby known to be my Disciples; and, Let Brotherly Love continue; and, Be kindly affectioned one to another, with Brotherly Love. And though this Precept be also in many more Scriptures again and again inculcated, yet they have not loved one another, but they have been very unkind one towards another, and have had many heart-risings one against another; and they have not in honour pre-ferred

ferred one another, but slighted and despised one another, and spoken reproachfully one of another : And though the Spirit of Christ in Paul hath said, *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind* ; yet they have been ready to compel men to their understandings ; whether they have been persuaded in their own minds or not. And though it is said in the Scriptures of Truth ; That *whatever is not of Faith, is Sin* ; yet they have been ready to constrain others to conform to their way, whether they have had Faith to believe it is the Lords mind, or nor. And though our Lord say, *Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy Brothers Eye, and considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye ?* Yet they have been Eagle-ey'd to behold the mote that is in some others, which it may be hath been real Errors in them, and it may be not ; but have not considered the great Beam of Errors and Misarrriages that are in themselves ; which may have been as much greater then the miscairriages of others, as a Beam is greater then a Mote.

And thus the Lords People have manifested a very great disobedience unto all the blessed Instructions of the Spirit of Christ of this kind. And of this, very many both of the Baptised Churches, the Presbyterians, the Independants, and Quakers, have been very guilty, as is too well known.

* Or
shoulder.

The Lord make all his People sensible of it, and set them all unanimously waiting and praying that all the Lords People may have a pure Language turned to them ; that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one * consent : All the mists and darknes that came from the bottomless Pit (that are yet among them) being dispelled by the clear Light of the Gospel, shining more and more unto the perfect Day. And in the mean timeloving and approving whatsoever good thing they see one in another ; and rejoicing in the Grace of God communicated unto any Soul whatsoever, though they differ in many things from those that see it ; No more hating or despising, but pitying and compassionating one another in any thing that they judge is Darknes or Error : And being desirous more to have their Eyes upon the lovely part one of another, then upon the naked part, but covering that with the Garment of Love : for Love is not willing to entertain any evil thoughts of those it loves. Love delights to look upon the lovely parts of the Saints very much, but to hide and cover from its Eye that which is uncomely ; at least so far as not to condemn them, and to conclude them none of the Lords : No, Love will not think such evil thoughts, but still hopeth well, and judgeth well of the Persons, though not of the Infirmities or Evils. And though it rejoices not in Iniquity, (but pities and compassionates the Souls in whom any Iniquity is found) yet it rejoiceth in the Truth, and in all that walk in the Truth, notwithstanding the weakneses that may be in any of them.

So let henceforth all the Disciples of Christ demean themselves one to another. Amen,

VIII.
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Medi-
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the Word
hard.

VIII. Another great Evil in very many of the Lords People, is the Sin of the neglect of a due and constant setting apart time to call to mind the Word of the Lord, after they have heard it. And this may be aptly and fitly called, The Sin of Indigestion, or of NOT CHEWING THE CUD.

The general coldness of Love to God (by reason, as hath been said, of other Lovers interposing) having been such, as they have so little, and do so little regard

regard his Word; as that some persons do not afford any pains or time to recollect what they hear; sometimes not once in a month, nor sometimes once in a quarter of a year: But they go to hear the Word for customs sake, and to pacifie Conscience, and content themselves with bare so doing; not considering that the Apostle saies, *That he that is not a forgetful Hearer, but a doer of the Word, that man shall be blessed in his Deed*; but he that is a forgetful Hearer, can expect no blessing. The good Seed of the Word cannot grow up there, when he either suffereth the Devil to catch it from him, or the cares of this World, and the deceitfulness of Riches to choak it. This heart is not the good ground in which the Word is sowed, so as to bring forth thirty, sixty, or an hundred fold. But this hath been a sin of very many, that they very seldom take time so much as to call to memory the Word they have heard; but hearing the Word on the first day of the week, many times think no more of it all the week following. It is well known that the two distinguishing Characters that were given of the clean Beasts, which onely were acceptable to God in Sacrifice under the Law, were that they were such as did Chew the Cud, and part the Hoof. And it is certain, that those Souls cannot be clean under the Gospel, that do not Chew the Cud; that do not review and recal to mind, and meditate upon the Word of God when they have heard it. *Paul speaking of the Word of the Gospel, sayes, It is the Word whereby ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I have preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain; and it is the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.* But those that keep it not in memory, cannot be saved. *Whereby ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I have preached unto you.* The Word of Truth maketh Souls clean. *Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth*; but it is by treasuring it up in the heart. The cleanest and purest Souls, have the Word of Christ dwelling most plentifully in them. *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way, but by taking heed thereto according to thy Word, Psal. 119. 9.* The Blessed man when he hears the Word, doth not let it go in at one ear, and out at another, but his delight is in it, and he meditates on it day and night, *Psal. 1. 2.* But it is no wonder such pollutions and uncleannesses appear in many of the Lords People; seeing they do so little Chew the Cud. It is no wonder their Souls thrive no more, seeing the Word so quickly passes from them undigested. They go to hear the Word as the Food of their Souls, but digest it not by Meditation and Chewing upon it, and getting the sweetness and nourishment of it; and therefore are lean and starved Souls, though at plentiful Tables.

THIS, this hath been also another great evil in many of the Lords People; And what is the root of this carelessness, and indifferency whether they have nourishment from the Word or nor, hath been shewed in the mentioning of the first Evil, that hath been in this Discourse declared, and shewed to the Houle of *Jacob*. And they that have been guilty of not Chewing the Cud, in the sense now declared, are some of the people of the several understandings; and the *Quakers*, (though all of them are not guilty of it, but) very many of them are grossly guilty of this sin of Indigestion; and though many of them are ready and forward to go to hear the Word, yet they too much satisfie themselves with a bare so doing, as if that were enough; and they very rarely take any time to do themselves & their Families good, by repeating each what they remember, to the help of one anothers memory in what they

James 1:
25.

1 Cor. 15:
1, 2.

Rom. 1.
16.

John 17:
17.

they have heard : So that there appears little growth in many Professors ; but where they were ten years since, the same they are now : or scarce so far. But it may be some of them are gone back many degrees, because they digest not their Spiritual Food.

And one great reason of some of the *Baptised Peoples* so doing, is their using (when they had full liberty) to continue their First Day's ordinary Exercises until four of the Clock in the Afternoon, (at which time if they had broken up, they had done well) and then after that, to continue the rest of the Day in doing the business of the Church, viz. To reprove particular persons, where there was need, and to inquire into the state of the Sick, or the Poor and Needy : and to receive in or cast out, as occasion required : And these things taking up their time * until it was late, then they had no time before Supper for any other Service ; and after Supper such Services with Children and Servants use to be lame Services, and some elder People also, being then unfit for any thing but to sleep : so that they had no time on the First Day of the Week for to chew the Cud : And for other Days, the World so took up some of them, as well as some *Presbyters*, *Quakers*, and *Independants*, as they scarce minded to go to a Meeting ; or if they did, the World had so eaten them up, that they little cared to minde any thing but their Worldly Business ; and sometimes some would scarce have gone to a Meeting any week day, but to stop the Clamours of their Consciences ; and it had been as good they had staid at home, as gone, and as much acceptance it would have had with God, unless they had gone to more purpose.

I mention this as a distinct Evil, and not among the Omissions already mentioned ; because (it may be) some do scarce think it to be a Duty required of them.

But let all the House of *Israel* know, That this is assuredly a great Evil of those that have been guilty of it ; and that forgetful Hearers are not blessed.

But some *Baptised People*, and the *Quakers*, and many *Presbyterians* and *Independants* also have been very guilty of this great evil, and it must be declared unto them, and let them not think to hide it : but as they desire to be blessed, let them Repent and Reform.

IX.
TALE-
BEAR-
ING, OR
BACKBI
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IX. Another great Evil of the Lords People, of which they are generally very guilty, is the Sin of BACK-BITING : And this is a sore Evil, and a mischievous Sin ; though it is a Sin which it may be many of them never think of thefulness of it, nor scarcely ever think it to be a Sin. And that Evil which the Spirit of God gives this title unto, is exprest by a variety of other such-like Titles in the Scriptures : As the *Whisperer*, the *Talebearer*, the *Babler*, the *Railer*, the *Slanderer*, the *Evil-furmisier*.

Now that the Lords People may be shewn their Evil herein, let them but take a view of their deformity of this kind also, in the Glass of the Scriptures, even in the blessed Words of Truth therein contained.

And first, It is against the exprest Precept and Commandment of the Lord, *Lev. 19. 17. Thou shalt not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among thy People.* So that he that in any sence goes up and down, and carries Tales, sins against this Command of the Lord : but much more he or she that carries Tales that tend to the defaming of others, whether they be true or false ; for it is exprestly said,

said, Thou shalt not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among thy people : And therefore the Spirit of the Lord gives us that Precept also in the Gospel, 1 Pet. 4. 15. *But let none of you suffer as an evil doer, or as a busy body in other mens matters.* It is a sin in the Lords People to be a busy-body in other mens matters. And if they keep their own Vineyard well, they have enough to do there, and they need not busy themselves in other mens matters ; they need not go up and down as Tale-bearers and Back-biters.

But,
Secondly, We find in Scripture, that this sin of Back-biting, Tale-bearing, and Whispering, is ranked amongst the worst of sins, as Rom. 1. 29. It is laid of some of the Heathen that were given over unto a reprobate mind ; that they being filled with all unrighteousness, were Fornicators, covetous, malicious, full of envy, Whisperers, Back-biters, &c. And how sad a thing is it, that any of these evils should be found in Saints, in persons professing Godliness.

But the Question is, Wherein doth the evil and hainousness of this sin appear, that it is ranked among these other hateful sins ?

The Answer is, This sin is very hainous, because (if we well consider it) we shall find that it goeth not alone, but many other evils attend it, and are the constant Companions of it. And to the end we may take a view of them, let it be considered what are the temptations to, or the leading causes of this evil ; and they are three ; Either,

First, This sin is occasioned by some discontent, or contention or heart-risings that are between two parties. Or,

Secondly, It is occasioned through a great disposition that is in many people (but in some more then others) to be very talkative, and prating ; and such persons, rather then fail to maintain discourse, though to little purpose, are often meddling with other mens matters. Or,

Thirdly, It is occasioned sometimes through a disposition in men to boast, and vaunt, and to speak of others weakness, to render themselves to be the more excelling in Parts, or in Virtue, or in Zeal, or Courage, or Faithfulness, &c.

Now as it is occasioned either of those wayes much evil attends it ; for if it be occasioned through discontents and discords between any, then he that is the Back-biter is under a great temptation to render the actions, or words of the man whom he back-bites, much otherwise, and much worse then they will appear to be when a man is present to make his defence : for the very alteration of a word, may make a matter seem much worse then indeed it is ; or the leaving out, or the not telling some part of a mans words ; but leaving out some material word, may also do the like ; or the aggravating some little circumstances of a mans words, carriages, and actions, straining them to the highest pin, and stretching them beyond what they were ; and withall covering and hiding of a mans own weaknesses, or miscarriages, and putting the best face and covering on a mans own words : These things also do much alter the case, and may render the Back-biter very worthy, and honourable, and the back-bitten a very unworthy and and unlovely person in the thoughts of them that hear it ; if they have so little prudence or wisdom, or so little justice or honesty, as to take up those reports, or to receive or believe them before they hear the party that's back-bitten to make his own defence.

And these are the evils that in this case (where there is heart-risings between two parties for any offences given or taken) do attend Back-biting and Tale-barcing.

1. Lying. 2. Slandering. 3. Unrighteousness and Deceitfulness. 4. Malignity and Envy. 5. A sowing of Discord. 6. Great Injuriousness. For in the alteration of a mans words, he that reports them with alterations of them, tells alie, for the man spake not so: And in leaving out of somethings, and making additions and alterations, (either upon mistakes, or forgetfulness, or wilfulness) men do often slander their Brethren, and cast such an odium upon them as ought not to be cast. And herein they are unjust, unrighteous, and deceitful, and oftentimes malignity, and spleen, and envy is therein manifested: And oftentimes this Tale-bearing, and speaking to the defaming, reproaching and undervaluing of a man behind his back, doth teget ill blood in the parties that hear it, and sometimes makes a man that was a dear and intimate friend to such a man, to become strange to him; it separateth chief friends: and herein besides in other respects which might be mentioned, the back-biter is very injurious unto him that he back-bites.

And all these evils are common with Back-biters, and whisperers, that is, such persons as are apt to take a liberty to speak any thing at any time, to the defaming, undervaluing, or disparaging a man behind his back. I say it is common for Back biters to be liars, slanderers, unrighteous, deceitful, &c. Yea though in other respects the Back-biters may be good men, and good women, and such as truly fear and love the Lord: Yet in being Back-biters, and taking a liberty to speak any thing, that tends to the defaming of others behind their backs; they do often therein appear to be liars, slanderers, unrighteous, deceitful, injurious, &c. Yea though the persons that do back-bite, do little think themselves to be so, but think themselves to be very just, and very righteous, and that they achor to tell a lie, or to slander any, or to be any way injurious; yea they think they loath such things: but herein their own hearts deceives them, and they are deceived; and though either they know not, or think not, or are not willing to think that they are deceived; yet they are deceived, and deceive others: And the more eminent such persons are for the good, and the worth that appears in them in other respects, the more they deceive the persons to whom they speak: for they will be ready to think, this is a good man, or a good woman, that speaks these things, and they would not report thus if it were not so. Whereas if it were a loose person, or a vile person that spake it, their words would not be taken up, or credited so soon, they could not so easily deceive the hearers.

And again; if a man be a Back-biter, not upon the account of any offence given or taken, but meerly through a disposition to prattle & tattle, to be very talkative, and full of words, and a love to hear himself talk among company; of which disposition women usually are more guilty then men, though some men are too guilty of it: Herein also the Back-biter doth become very guilty of lying, and slandering, unrighteousness, and deceitfulness, and sowing discords, and injuriousness. For these prattlers and tatters, do either speak something they have heard from other tatters or tale-bearers, or something which they conjecture, or imagine from such and such circumstances, or from seeming grounds, or from mistakes, or misapprehensions, which they

they have in themselves, or have received from others, in which they think they have very strong grounds for what they report. All which being examined, may be no grounds for such reports. And so in all these things the Talebearer, that speaks any thing that tends to the defaming of a person or person, is oftentimes a great liar, and slanderer, and is very unrighteous, and unjust, and is a sower of discord, and is very injurious; for it is very frequent for persons that tell tales or reports of things which they have heard from others, to make additions and alterations; either through badness of memory, or delight in many words, or both; for some cannot remember things exactly, and they speak at random; and others love many words, and have a faculty to stretch things beyond what they are; and most are subject to mistake words; and when one word is taken for another, or a sentence is taken to have another meaning than was intended, it much alters the case: and on these accounts many mischiefs, and evils have attended this kind of Talebearing also; when persons out of a desire to prattle, and for want of better discourse, do take that sinful liberty to speak things which tend to the defaming and undervaluing of others: wherein they have been guilty of much evil, and have greatly wronged their own Souls.

And so also when through a disposition to vaunt, and boast, and render a mans self to be excelling in Parts, or in Virtue, or Zeal, or Courage, &c. and to render another more mean, or low, and despicable, or unworthy, and to lessen the esteem that others have of them, or of any work or worth of theirs, herein also such a Backbiter is many times a hainous and grievous sinner, in the forementioned particulars; and doth prove to be also a proud boaster, and evil doer in a high degree.

And by this time it doth in part appear that the sin of Backbiting is a hainous crime; and it is no wonder that it is ranked amongst the worst of sins. But,

Thirdly, As the Scripture declares the sin of Talebearing to be against the expresse command of the Lord, and as it ranks it amongst the worst of sins. So thirdly, The Scriptures declare the words of Talebearers to be as wounds, and as the bitings of a Serpent, as Prov. 18. 8. *The words of a Tale-bearer, are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the Belly:* and Eccles. 10. 11. *Surely the Serpent will bite without enchantment, and a Babler is no better:* And how unworthy a thing is it for the Servants of our Lord Jesus Christ to wound one another, and to bite one another like the bitings of a Serpent? And how greatly unbecoming the Gospel, that requires such great degrees of love to brethren? Our Lord Christ gives this as the great Character whereby all men may know who are his Disciples, viz. *Their love one to another, By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another.* And the beloved Apostle John declares that this is the great evidence, which Saints have in their own Souls, that they are passed from Death to Life, because they love the Brethren. Now when a man doth wound and cut his Brother, yea wound and gash his very inward parts, as the Scripture declares, that the words of a Tale-bearer do; and when a man bites his brother, like the bitings of a Serpent, as the Scripture says, the words of a Tale-bearer are no better. I say, When a man doth thus wound and bite his Brother, What proof doth he give to others of his being a Disciple of Christ? Or what comfortable evidence can he have in his

John 13.
35.
1 John 3.
14.

own Soul, that he is passed from Death to Life? And yet these are the hateful and odious qualities of a Tale-bearer, as the Scripture declares them. And,

Fourthly, The Scripture declares that a Whisperer or Tale-bearer, is one that maketh divisions among Brethren; as *Prov. 16. 18. A Whisperer separateth chief Friends.* It is a very blessed thing for men and women to be always studying and striving to be Peace-makers, when there is any contention among Brethren. *Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God.* God is styled the God of Peace, and the Peace-makers shall be called his Children; it is a mark of a Child of God that is a Peace-maker. And great are the blessings that attend Brethrens dwelling together in Peace, in Love, having dear, and true, and oordial affections one toward another; And as *Peter* phrases it, having love unfeigned, and loving one another, with a pure heart fervently. And assuredly some of the Lords Servants do so love one another, they are very dear one to another; beholding the Image of the Lord Christ one in another, they are very lovely one in anothers Eye; and the trouble or grief that comes upon one, cuts the heart of another; and the joy of one, is the joy and comfort of another; and so they dwell together in unity, having one heart in dear love one to another: and this may be, though in some things they may differ in their judgements. Now where this dwelling together in amity, and unity is, the Scripture declares it to be a very lovely, and a very pleasant thing, and tells us, that there the Lord commands the Blessing, even life for evermore; and such are surely passed from Death to Life.

But a Whisperer doth that contrary, that sinful, that hateful work, that tends to separating of chief Friends; not onely of common and ordinary Friends, but such as were chief Friends, such as had a preference more then ordinary in the hearts and affections one of another: And this hath commonly been done by Tale-bearers: For the words of Tale-bearers, which they have spoken behind a mans back, have sometimes had such a deep influence upon the minds of men, as to race a friend out of the affections that before was very dear to them; and thence hath come an estrangedness, and distance which hath never been made up; And this hath been many times when there hath been no cause at all for it; it all things had been examined in a sober Spirit, face to face: But the Tale-bearers words having been received and taken for truths without examination, they have made a great distance between those that were before intimate Friends.

Fifthly, The Scriptures declare that a Tale-bearer revealeth secrets, which is an unworthy thing in any: for there are things which ought to be kept secret, if we love the wellfare, or the peace, or the credit one of another; and being concealed, and kept secret, no inconvenience, no evil effects come of it; but being revealed, are many times of very evil tendency. But saith the Spirit of God, *A Tale-bearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful Spirit, concealeth the matter, Prov. 11. 13.* And, *he that goeth about as a Tale-bearer, revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips, Prov. 20. 19.* So that he that is a Tale-bearer is very unfaithful, and it is a very indiscreet thing to have much to do with such a one; therefore meddle not with him, though he speak never so fairly.

Sixthly, The Scripture declares the displeasure of God to be great against such

Mat. 5. 9.

1 Pet. 1.
12.

Ps. 133
1, 2, 3.

such persons, as Prov. 6. 16, 17. *These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him; A proud look, a lying tongue, &c. And him that soweth discord among Brethren.* And Psal. 50. the Lord speaking of the wicked man, saith this of him among other things, *Thou sittest and speakest against thy Brother, and slanderest thine own Mothers Son.* (This is indeed an evil work, which evil men are found in.) But saith the Lord, *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; and thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self; But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee, &c.* So that we see the Lord hates such works in any; it is an abomination unto him, and he will reprove them sharply that are guilty of them. And,

Seventhly, The Scripture declares that the Lord will cut off such from his house, and from his Holy City, if they repent not; as Psal. 101. 5. *Who so privily slandereth his Neighbour, him will I cut off: Him that hath an high look, and a proud heart will not I suffer; and, ver. 8. I will early destroy all the wicked of the Land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the City of the Lord.*

Now having thus in part taken a view of what the Scriptures of Truth speak concerning Tale-bearers: We see that it greatly concerns the Lords people to be exhorted for time to come, to be very wary of that hateful Evil of Tale-bearing, or Back-biting; and to keep a strict watch over themselves, lest they be found some way or other guilty of it; and to that end it concerns them to be very careful what they say of any person, or party behind their backs.

And indeed upon all accounts the Lords People have great reason with David to set a watch before the door of their lips; for sayes he, *I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a Bridle.* Happy are they that so do, and that do restrain their lips from many words; for it is a great point of wisdom so to do, as the Scripture declares, Prov. 13. 3. *He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life; but he that openeth wide his lips, shall have destruction.* And Prov. 10. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips, is wise.* Many prattling Women, and Men also, that take a liberty to let their tongues run wildly, do not consider the great Truths contained in these words. They seldom think, that to be full of words, is to be sinful; and that it is true wisdom to refrain their lips from many words, unless they are sure they are words that may administer grace to the hearers: And they little consider, that the life and safety of their Souls depends upon the keeping their mouth, and that destruction to their Souls may be the issue of opening wide their Lips. And O how few are there that are so wary of keeping their tongues as they ought? For sayes James, *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.* But how few such perfect men are there? Ps. 39. 3. Jam. 3. 2.

How greatly therefore doth it concern the Lords People to be deeply sensible of the greatness of this great Evil, which many of them have been verily guilty of, and most of them more or less have eried in?

Not that it is hereby asserted, that in no case there ought to be any thing said of any person or persons miscarriages, but to their faces; for sometimes there may be good ends in speaking of them to some others in order to the reclaiming of them; as in order to the bringing of it to the Church, when the

the rule requires it; or in order to the moving Parents to reprove, correct, or instruct their Children as the occasion may be. It cannot be said to be the sin of *Joseph*, that he brought the evil report of some of his Brethren to his Father; The like may be said in other cases.

But what is here declared against, is plainly shewed to be the Sin of whomsoever are guilty of it. And that some in a Gospel-Church have been guilty of this Sin of Back-biting, is clear by what *Paul* speaks to the Church of *Corinth*, 2 Cor. 12. 20. For, *I fear lest when I come among you, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as you would not: Lest there be debates, envyings, strifes, back bitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults.* And 1 Cor. 1. 11. *It hath been declared unto me, of you, my Brethren; by them of the House of Cloe, that there are contentions among you; and Chap. 3. 3, 4. For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envyings, and strifes, and divisions; are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* He had thus expressed himself in the first Chapter concerning this very Church. *I thank my God alwayes on your behalf, for the Grace that is given you by Jesus Christ, that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the Testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that you come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Here we see that some that were in a Church of Christ, that were enriched by him in all utterance, and all knowledge, and came behind in no gift, and that were waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, had contentions, and strifes, and envyings, and back-bitings, and whisperings, and swellings, and tumults amongst them; which were a grief and trouble to *Paul*. So that he was like to come among them, when he did come, rather with reproof, and with a Rod, then with that joy and comfort that he desired to come among them with; And might it not be for these among other Evils, that many of them were sick and weak, and many were fallen asleep?

1 Cor. 11.
As 5, 6, 7.

But as in the Church of *Corinth*, so many among the Churches in *England* are very guilty of this great Evil which the Lord hates, and the mischiefs which Back-bitings, and Tale-bearings have done among many Church-Members, have been very great; and to cure the Wounds, and heal the Divisions that have been made among some Church-Members, hath cost many hours, and many daves of precious time: And yet with some, all time and labour hath been lost; the breaches have been so great, as have never yet been made up; and these breaches have been greatly widened by the whisperings, and the back-bitings of many amongst them.

And this is the ninth sort of Evil which must be shewed to the Lords People, to the end they may be greatly humbled under the sense of it, and may wash their hearts from this wickedness also, that they may be saved in the day of the Lords anger; that the Lords People may be so thorowly purged, and cleansed from this Evil, as they may not only refrain their lips from Back-biting, but may be of that Blessed disposition of him that shall dwell in Gods Holy Hill; mentioned *Psal. 15. 3.* That, *He back-biteeth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his Neighbour; nor taketh up a reproach against his Neighbour.* Though a Back-biter should utter a reproach to him against his Neighbour, yet he will by no means take it up or receive it. And this is a Blessed disposition indeed, which the Lord grant that all his People may possess after.

X. Another

X. Another great Evil to be shewed to the Lords People, which is the last that is to be mentioned in this Catalogue, Is the spending too much of their precious time, when they come into company one with another, in discourses of worldly things, and sometimes unnecessary things. I do not say that all talk of worldly business is alwayes unnecessary: But that there is very frequently, & very commonly talking that is unnecessary, which is the Evil of many of the Lords People; and shews they favour the things that be of men more then the things that be of God. This is a sad token that many of the Lords People have lost their first Love, for it was not wont to be so with them. But I cannot say that of all the several distinctions of the Lords Servants, any one are more guilty of this Evil then other; but some of them all are eminent in the contrary vertue, viz. Generally full of Spiritual Discourses, wheresoever they can have opportunity; but these are but a few. But the far greater number of them all, do manifest but little Spiritual favour when they come together, or where ever they come; which doth manifest great carnality, and is contrary to the plain Rule of the Scripture, as *Ephes. 4. 19.* Let your communication be such, as may minister Grace to the Heavens. & *Ephes. 5. 19, 20. Col. 3. 16, 17. 1 Thes. 5. 11.* But the more Spiritually minded we are, the more will we be covering to spend our time in things that are of a Spiritual advantage to our selves, to one another, to Acquaintance, to near Relations, to Children, to Servants, and all Companies, so far as we may.

But O House of *Jacob*, you have been greatly deficient herein. And for this, together with all the other Evils that are herein shewed to be the Sins of the Lords People; it concerns you to * be on the Mountains, like Doves of the Valleys, all of you mourning, every one for his and her Iniquities in particular whatever they have been.

Which the Lord grant unto you all.

A M E N.

X.
MIS-
PEENCE
OF
TIME
IN
VAIN
DIS-
COUR-
SES.

Ezek. 71
16.

A N

A N
A L A R M
T O
R E P E N T A N C E.



These ten particular Evils that are here declared, are the Transgressions by which the Lords People have very greatly provoked the Lord to anger ; and though there are no other particular Evils here mentioned, yet it may not be concluded that the Lords People are not guilty of other Evils also : But these Evils, are the Evils that are most apparently against clear light, and against the plain and undisputable Rules of the Gospel, and of the Law and the Prophets, even such certain Truths as cannot be denied, but are fully owned by every one that doth truly fear the Lord.

There are many Errors and Evils either of Omission or Commission, which the *Baptised*, the *Presbyterian*, the *Quakers*, and the *Independants* are most certainly guilty of, in the way of their particular distinct understandings and practice ; for some of them do not practise the Ordinances of Christ, according to the Rules of the Gospel, but according to mens inventions ; and some of them do omit, and slight, and neglect the Ordinances of Christ unworthily ; and some do sinfully admit of unfit and unworthy subjects to the Ordinances of Christ ; which are great Evils in all them that are guilty of them. But these things are not done, I hope, by any of them against their light and understanding, (if they be, it is a fearful thing) but they all walk and practise, as we may hope, according to the clearest Light they have in their understandings, and as God gives them more Light, we may hope they will be ready to walk in it ; for which doubtless they are all waiting.

But the Evils which I have had a Commission to declare unto the House of *Jacob*, are such as they cannot deny to be their Evils, when they hear this Declaration of them, & such as they must and will confess to be abounding among them. The which no doubt they will acknowledge they ought to repent of, and to abhor themselves for them in Dust and Ashes.

And

And it being so, none of the Lords People (I presume) will dare to cavil with it. The Word of the Lord giving such full Authority unto all that are enabled to Preach and Publish it, (and to me in particular, upon whom the burthen, the Blessed burthen of it is laid) to declare among other Messages, this Message: To declare unto his People their Transgressions. And I hope all the wise in heart will understand the Voice of the Lord in it, and improve it to the end for which it is published.

DANIEL 12. 10.

Many shall be purified, and made white and tryed; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

I have had in my custody, for about three years time, the Copy of two Letters which came from Amsterdam, in August, 1661. to a person of worth in this Kingdom; concerning a Vision which an Antient man of Friesland had about that time, which I judge worthy of publishing. And though I cannot say that I am so confident that the Vision and Message, mentioned in those Letters, is so truly from the Lord, and so certainly the Word of the Lord, as that which is written in the Scriptures of Truth; yet because so much of the Prophecie therein mentioned (if it be a Prophecie) is come to pass, I dare not say it is not truly from the Lord; but it is very probable that it is the Word of the Lord.

And therefore I publish it, that it may be observed by the Lords People, and all whom it may concern. And I shall publish those Letters in the very words of him that sent them, without altering or adding so much as a Syllable; not imposing it on any to believe, but leave it to all persons to make such use thereof as the Lord shall direct them.

The Copies of part of two Letters Written from Amsterdam, in August 1661. so far as relates to the business that's here intended to be Published.

I Have been told by two or three sober Persons, that there hath been in this Town, whiles I was at the Hague, an Antient man of Friesland, who came hither by the direction of an Angel, who he said appeared unto him at night about eleven of the Clock, when he was a bed, making his Room, formerly dark, more bright then when the Sun at noon day shined upon it; whereat he being amazed and troubled, he saith, The Angel stood still till he had recovered himself, and then told him, That he was sent from God, to command him to go to the reformed Ministers of this Countrey, to bid them exhort earnestly their Hearers to Repent, and abstain from the Prophaneness, and sinful
 K excesses

excesses which abounded in their courses, because God hath determined to visit this People with the Sword, with the Plague, and with Famine; in the extremity of all these Plagues, except they be humbled and Repent; that the Sword shall be in all their Quarters at once; that the Plague shall be such, that the living shall not be able to bury all the dead, but that the Dogs shall eat the Carcasses lying unburied; and that the Famine shall be such, that one pound of Bread shall be worth a Rix Dollar. And when the Old Man did ask him when this should be; the answer was, That he should give the Reformed Ministers warning thereof first, and as they should behave themselves, he should then come to him again and let him know further; That if they repented not, he should be told of the time, which should not fail one hour.

Mr. Rulice told me some part of this, having understood it from a sober Woman of his Congregation, who spake with him, of whom (when she came to spake to him) he asked whether she was of the Reformed Church-Members? And when she had answered, Yea; then he told her these things; and added, That the Angel said, That because he was an Old Man, He was not charged to carry the same Message of the like Judgements to befall to England, except they also Repented for the great sins which bear sway in that Nation, but that he should write unto England to warn them of the same purpose of God against them if they did not alter their courses. I shall inquire further into this matter, and let you know what I learn.

The Woman that related a part of this to Mr. Rulice, (for some part, namely concerning the Sword to be upon the four corners of the Provinces, I heard from another hand) added, That he was commanded to give the same warning to the Reformed Ministers in Brabant; and that he said, He could wish it had pleased the Lord to imploy some body else in this Message: For, said he, I scarce dare go along the Streets for Boys, and people following and taking me for a Quaker, which is very troublesome to me.

Whether this matter of the Vision be true or no, that the man (who is known to be of a good life) hath seen, it is not material to me, but that he saith these things is out of doubt; And that the duty of Repentance is very necessary, no man can deny, that cannot look into the lives of Professors: But that this Message should now be sent, when this People think themselves at peace with all the World, and in a more flourishing condition then ever, is remarkable to me, and like unto the way of God; who to ballance their carnal confidence, and wanton security, doth let them

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them know the danger whereby they are, except they behave themselves wisely, and walk humbly before him; Which I beseech the Lord to make you in England, as well as those that are here, sensible of.

Amsterdam, the 15th of August, 1661.

The Copy of the other Letter.

I Wrote last week of an old man of Friesland who had seen an Angel. Two dayes agoe, Mr. Comenius and I, with another, went to him, and spake with him; his name is Homme Theus, his Age is 76. his aboad in a Village near Sneek in Friesland; his Employment is in the Winter, a Schoolmaster of Boys; in the Summer, because the Children are in the Field, commonly he goeth about as a Physitian of Beasts, and gets some livelyhood by that means. I asked him first, whether an Angel had spoken to him? and he said, That in the night when he was asleep, he found himself wakened, and an Angel standing before his Bed with a great light, as if it had been the Sun in the Room; and that he stayed with him from about eleven of the Clock until toward morning, about four hours time; and that he told him, He was sent to command him to give warning unto the Ministers of the several professions of this Land, viz. The Reformed, the Lutherans, the Anabaptists, the Papists, that God would punish the said Land for their unthankfulness; for the great prosperity hitherto bestowed upon these Provinces, for their Pride, for their Covetousness, for their Oppression of the poor in Judicatures; for their excess of Riot and Wantonness; for Adultery and Fornication; and for their hatred one of another, and their persecuting each of other for differences of Religion, seeking to force each other to their particular way of Profession; saying, That God did hate this practise, and would severely punish them for it, except they Repented.

And further the Angel said, That the Gospel was truly preached in these Lands, but their sin lay in that they did not live up to it, and to the knowledge they had of it. And he said, That if the Ministry did not warn this People, that God would first visit them and their Houses, for the neglect of this duty; and that he would send upon the

Land, if they repented not, the Sword, the Famine, and the Pestilence; A Pestilence, such that the Living should not be able to bury the Dead, but they should lie upon the streets and be torn with Dogs; A Famine, such that a pound of Bread should cost a Rix Dollar, which should be upon the four Corners of the Land. He said, The Angel commanded him to give the same warning into England, and for the same sins, the same Judgements should befall unto them. — I asked him concerning the discharge of his Commission unto the Ministers of this place, how he had performed it: He told me, He had been with one of the Ministers of his acquaintance, Mr. Sibetanus, with whom that day he had dined, and that by him he would send a writing unto the Consistory of this City; and that this Minister had undertaken to deliver it at their Meeting the next day; and that he would cause it to be Printed, to give a warning to all. Now whether this be done or no, I know not, but I suppose we shall hear more of it if the Consistory was made acquainted with this matter.

Yesterday a Friend of mine went to see him, and speak with him, but he was early gone out of Town to Sardum, a Village not far from hence, in North Holland; And this day one hath been to inquire after him, but he is not yet come to Town, and it is doubtful whether he will come or no hither again.

Just now I am told, that he hath given a Relation of the Message, written with his own Hand, to a Lutheran, from whom I may happily get a Copie of it. The Old Man hath told the same things to others as well as to me, and I make no doubt but others will write of it into England.

Amsterdam, August, $\frac{16}{25}$ 1661.

† Luke
12. 47, 48
|| The
times of
this igno-
rance God
winked
at, Acts.
17. 30.

In which Letters I shall onely take notice of this one passage, (leaving the rest to be of what use the Lord shall please to make it to any) namely, That the Judgements of God are therein said to come upon those professing People, For not living according to what they knew. It is unquestionably true, that sins against knowledge have much higher aggravations then sins of ignorance; and God takes it more unkindly from his People when they sin against their knowledge, then if they sin ignorantly. † The Servant that knew his Masters Will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes: But he that knew || not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.

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stripes: for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required. Happy are the People that live up to what they know. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.* But those Peoples case is very deplorable and sad, who have continued long in living in sins against knowledge. *Dauids sins against knowledge cost him very dear; and so have the sins against knowledge of many others, and many that are yet prospering may be reserved to more severe judgements unless they repent.*

In the consideration of which, how greatly doth it concern the Lords People to dread and fear the continuing to live in the Sins that are in the preceding Discourse declared to be their sins? They being all sins against their knowledge, Sins which they all know to be Sins against the plain Laws and Precepts of the Lord their God, and their Redeemer. They may be, and are many of them, sinners in other respects, in which they sin for want of knowledge, they sin through ignorance; but they cannot say so of any one of these Sins.

They sin (as hath been said) some of them in their Omissions of the Ordinances of the Lord Christ; and others in the practise of them in an irregular way; but this they do for want of knowledge; (though they are not thereby wholly excused) they do not sin therein against their knowledge; for it is out of doubt that many of them, if not most of them, do practice according to what they know and understand.

But the great sin of the Lords People lyeth in this, That they do not live up to what they know, do not walk according to the knowledge of the Gospel, that every one in particular hath.

But now to provoke the Lords People to Repentance of these Sins against knowledge especially, and thoroughly to amend their ways. I must here lay down some great and weighty Considerations, which it concerns them seriously and in good earnest to consider.

Some great and weighty Considerations which it concerns the Lords People in good earnest to consider of.

I. It concerns them to Consider that when a People live in a continued course of sinning against the Lord, in such great Abominations as these, which the Lord so much abhors; that though that People make never so high a Profession of being his People; and though they appear much in worshipping of him in the Ordinances of his own appointment, that yet the Lord doth abhor and loath their most solemn Services. And they may keep many solemn Fasting Dayes, or Feasting Dayes, and yet have no acceptance with him, but he may so loath them, as to be ready to spue them out of his mouth; yea though they be such, as seem to have such confidence in him, as they desire the Day of the Lord, as appears, *Amos 5. 21, 22, 23, 24. I hate, I despise your Feast Dayes, and I will not smell in your Solemn Assemblies; I will not accept them, neither will I regard the Peace Offerings of your Fat Beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs, for I will not hear the Melody of thy Viols; But let Judgement run down as Water, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream.*

I. Consideration.

This People pretended to desire the Day of the Lord, as appears in the three former Verses, and they were diligent in worshipping him, but they continued in a course of sinning against him, and therefore he sayes, *I hate, I despise your Services.* People may not think to live in sin, and to pacifie the

AN ALARM

the Lord with keeping dayes of Prayer, or Praises, or of hearing his Word. No, nothing without a through-amending of their wayes, will find acceptance with him; and it is a most unworthy thing to think that any thing esse without this will do it.

I have heard a Story of a vile Prophane wicked Man that would wear an Image of Gold continually in his Hat; And when he had done any great Evil that did trouble his Conscience, then he would take down his God of Gold and kiss it, and pray forgiveness of it, and think all was well.

And what do they think less that think they may continue in Sin, and pacifie the Lord with their Prayers and Performances? But they deceive themselves, that will not do it: Therefore it is said, *Mich. 6. 6, 7, 8. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt Offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or ten thousands of Rivers of Oyl? Shall I give my first-born for my Transgression, or the Fruit of my Body for the sin of my Soul? (All this were vain.) But he hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to love mercy, and do justly, and to walk humbly with thy God.* Nothing less will please the Lord, then a righteous, holy, humble walking before him. And let none think to abuse Gospel-Grace, and turn it into wantonness, because they must not be saved by works, but by the Blood of Christ; therefore to waik loosely: for this is

Heb. 12. 14

a certain truth both in the Law and Gospel, That without Holiness no man shall see the Lord. It is true, there is no Salvation by Works, but by Christ alone. But those who are saved by Christ, are also Sanctified by Jesus Christ. And for those that pretend Faith in Christ, for such to live in sin, because Grace hath abounded, it is the more an abomination unto the Lord; and of such he will say, That he hates and despises their Services; and he will not smell any sweet savour in their performances; neither can they make any melody in their Hearts to the Lord. And as it is said here, *Take away from me the noise of thy Songs; I will not hear the melody of thy Viols. So may he say to such.* And to this purpose the Lord exprelles himself also by his Prophet *Jeremiab, Jer. 14. 12. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; And when they offer burnt Offerings, and an Oblation, I will not accept them, but I will consume them by the Sword, and by the Famine, and by the Pestilence.* And *Jer. 6. 20. To what purpose cometh there to me Incense from Sheba, and the sweet Cane from a far Countrey? Your burnt Offerings a erot acceptable, nor your Sacrifices sweet unto me.*

It is well known that this People were the Lords People; they were the House of Jacob, and they frequently drew near to God, to worship him according to his own appointments, offering burnt Offerings, and Sacrifices, and Oblations, and Fasted and Prayed; and yet the Lord sayes, To what purpose do you do all this? It is not acceptable unto me, I will not accept them, nor hear your cry. And he speaks also to the same purpose by the Prophet *Isaiab, Isa. 1. 11, 12. &c. To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt Offerings of Rams, and of the fat of fed Beasts: I delight not in the Blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of He-goats. When ye cometo appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, that ye tread my Courts? Bring no more vain Oblations, Incense is an abomination unto me. The new Moons, and Sabbaths; The calling of the Assemblies*

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Assemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even your solemn Meetings: Your new Moons, and your appointed Feasts, my Soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: Tea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well, &c.

Here it is plain, that though there be a multitude of Duties performed, yet if a People be polluted with Sin and Defilement, it is to no purpose. To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices to me, saith the Lord? The Lord desires Holiness more then Sacrifices, and Purity of Heart more then Prayers; For if a People be full of sin and iniquity, and hugg that, and keep that in their bosoms still; though they make many Prayers, he will not hear them: and for the fastings of such a People, they are not at all acceptable unto him. When they fast, I will not hear their cries, because they do not put away the evil of their doings from before his eyes; the evil of their Coverousness, and hardness of heart, &c. But he tells us what Fast will be acceptable unto him, *Isa. 58.6,7. Is not this the Fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of Wickedness, to undoe heavy burthens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every Yoak? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy House? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thine own flesh?*

This is the Fast that God hath chosen; such a day of Fast, as wherein a man doth so truly repent of sin, as to put it quite away, and never return to it any more, but to be greatly exercised in the contrary vertue for ever after. And dayes of Humiliation and Fasting are appointed for this end; that persons may be so truly humbled under the sense of sin, as to loath themselves for it, and to acknowledge that they are not worthy to eat Bread, or to receive any mercy for their refreshment. And if we ought to loath our selves for sin, much more should we loath all our abominations in the sight of the Lord; and this the Lord requires. Put away all the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; to be free-hearted, tender-hearted, compassionate. Deal thy Bread to the hungry, bring the poor that are cast out to thy House; cloath the naked, and hide not thy self from thine own flesh, from the pinching streights of thy Brother, whose pinching necessities should be on thy heart, with as much sense as if it were on thine own flesh; for their flesh is as our flesh, and their Children as our Children. Wouldst thou suffer thine own Body, or thine own Wife or Chi'dren, to be in such streights and distresses, as thou seest some of the Lords dear Servants sometimes are in?

Neb. 5. 5.

O hide not thy self from thine own flesh, put away covetousness, and hardness of heart; cease from that and all other Evils, and learn to do well in these and all other blessed deeds. Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that be in adversity, as being your selves also in the Body. *Heb. 13. 2.* And to do good, and to communicate forget not, For with such Sacrifices God is well pleased, *vers. 16.* Such Fastings as are accompanied with such Sacrifices, with a liberal and bountiful doing of these things, are the * Fastings that God expects, and accepts; and otherwise when persons

sons

sons Fast; and bow down their hands as a Bull-rush, for a time, and continue in sin, though they should pray till their voice and strength should fail, and Fast till their bodies were fainting and dying, it would find no acceptance with God, but be loathsome unto him. *Your new Moons, and your appointed Feasts, my Soul hateth, they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them.*

Why doth the Lord so loath these performances which were of his own appointments? Because they were a sinful People, a People laden with iniquity, a seed of Evil doers, Children that were Corrupters, that had forsaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of *Israel* unto anger, and were gone away backward, *Isa. 1. 4.* Which are the direct Characters of many of the Lords People now, though they continue worshiping of him in his own appointments, as they did them; for they did come to appear before the Lord, and tread his Courts, and frequent the solemn Assemblies, and observe the new Moons, and offer a multitude of Sacrifices, and burne Offerings of Rams, and of Bulls, and of Lambs, and of He-Goats, and did spread forth their hands, and make many Prayers.

Verses 11
12, 13, 14
15.

Now let all the Lords People seriously ponder this great Consideration, and fear and dread the continuing in any known sin, and be far from deluding themselves with the vain thoughts of finding acceptance with God, in spending a whole day or dayes in a week, in the most solemn Church Assemblies, or in any other duty which the Lord requires, while they continue in sin, as remembering what the Lord here speaks in these Scriptures, and what is said, *Psal. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer.* And let them observe the gracious Exhortation of the Apostle, *Heb. 12. 28, 29. Let us have Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and Godly fear; for our God is (not like the vanities of the Heathens, to be pleased with many Lip-Services, without Reformation, but) a consuming fire.*

II.
Consideration,

31. Another great Consideration, that may be of use to provoke the Lords People to a thorow amending their wayes, is this, *viz.* That no persons that are not washed from the Pollutions and Iniquities mentioned in the preceding Discourse, shall be admitted to be of the number of them that shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; or that shall be accounted worthy to serve him, in the great work he hath to do in the latter day; for it is evident that those that are his Followers, are described to be such as have none of these Iniquities found in them, as appears in the Description, *Rev. 14. 1, 2, &c.* in these words, *And I looked, and lo a Lamb stood upon Mount Zion; and with him, a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Fathers Name written in their Foreheads; and they were redeemed from the Earth. These are they which were not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault, before the Throne of God.* And Chap. 17. 14. *He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and they that are with him, are Called, and Chosen, and Faithful.*

In which great Characters of the Lambs Followers, it is apparent, That they are not defiled with any of those Pollutions, which the greatest number

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number of the Lords People are now defiled with. For,

First, It is said, They have his Fathers Name written in their Foreheads. Which is an evident Demonstration that they shall be of such Holy and Heavenly Conversation; as shall evidently manifest whole Children they are; for it shall be as apparently manifest, as any thing is manifest that is fixed in a mans Forehead.

Characters
of the
Lambs
Followers.

Secondly, In that they are said to be redeemed from the Earth; it clearly manifests, that they shall not be men of an earthly mind, but be altogether disengaged in their affections from sublunary things, as having their affections wholly set on things above; and having their very hearts there, and having their conversations there also (*For our conversation is in Heaven, Phil. 3. 20*) contemning, and despising any thing in the Earth, when it comes in competition with the Service of their Lord and King; for they shall not love the World, nor the things that are in the World, but shall trample upon them all, having all things in the World under their Feet. No fear of loss of earthly things, nor hope of gain of worldly things, shall either deter them from the service of their Lord, or induce them unto any unworthy compliance. And in the service of their Lord, they shall not expect great Earthly Rewards, nor desire any more thereof then Abraham did in his service, in subduing the five Kings, that desired nothing but what the young men had eaten; as he said to the King of Sodom, I will not take any more, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abraham rich. So shall the Followers of the Lamb say to the World, to whom they may do good offices, by the appointment of their Lord; We will not take of you any reward for this Service, but what we have eaten, even what is enough to supply us and ours, while we are about this Work; And when our Work of this kind is done, we would not have any thing left of what we take for our Service: for we would not be one penny richer in estate then we were before; but what we have more, we shall account as a Canker, and as a Moth to the rest of our Estates, or to what the Lord may after give us, in the lawful and moderate following our particular Callings; but therewith we desire to be content, whether it be little or much; desiring to come off from publick Service, rather with less, then more then we had before. And we desire to manifest to the World, That we seek their Weal, and not their Wealth; their increase of Wealth External and Internal, and not the DIMINISHING OF ANY PART OF THEIR ESTATES.

It shall be manifest that they are redeemed from the Earth, by their being every way loose from the things that are on the Earth; and wholly set on the things that are above, and rejoycing in that their Names are written in Heaven; and in that they are sure of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for them.

Thirdly, It being said, That they shall not be defiled with Women, for they are Virgins; It doth manifest that they shall not onely be pure from Fornications or Adulteries in the Letter, but also in a Mystical and Spiritual sense; they shall not set up any other Lover in their hearts, but remain chaste Virgins to Chr st. They shall be as pure as Virgins, from having their hearts insinuated with the World, or any other thing that defileth. They shall not be defiled with the allurements of the Scarlet Whore; but shall hate to have any thing to do with the Cup of her Fornications. Her Trumpety they

shall not meddle with : But as soon as it is discovered to them, they shall detect it, and shall give themselves up wholly to the Lord Christ, to be guided by him alone, cleaving to him as a faithful and loyal Spouse, that abhors the thoughts of any but her only Beloved ; but shall give themselves up wholly to the Lord Christ, to be guided by him alone, and to follow him alone, which is the next Character that's given of them.

Fourthly, They shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. He being their Leader, they shall follow their Blessed Leader. They shall not receive the Precepts of men in the Worship of God ; but the Rules of Christ alone ; and shall receive the Law from his mouth alone, and not admit of mens inventions, and mens interpretations, further then they are perswaded it is according to his mind. He alone shall be observed by them ; and whatsoever he reveals to them, they shall do ; and into whatsoever Path he guides them, they shall go ; and shall not be tyed and stinted by men, to go hitherto and no further, but they shall follow him whithersoever he leads them ; for he hath promised, *I sa. 42. 16. That he will lead the Blind by a way they know not, and will lead them in Paths that they have not known ; and will make darkness light before them, and will make crooked things straight. These things he will do unto them, and will not forsake them.*

That we are at present in great blindness and darkness, is very evident ; and there are Wayes that yet we know not, and Paths that yet we have not understood ; namely, the Wayes and Paths which we all shall know, before we shall all walk in one Way. But we shall all so clearly see the true Way, in which we all ought to walk, as that the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein ; which Way we have not yet known, and which Path we have not yet understood. But the Lambs Followers shall be led by him purely, and he will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight ; and his Sheep shall hear his Voice, and shall not follow a stranger, but shall follow him whithersoever he goeth, and into whatsoever Way or Path he leadeth them.

Fifthly, They are redeemed from among men. They shall appear to be such as shall not walk according to their former vain Conventions : nor according to the wayes and customs of men, but as men of another Principle, and of another World, as redeemed from among men ; whereas before they walked so and so, and did so and so ; now they shall neither so walk, nor so do. It shall appear that they are not carnal, and walk as men, but as the Children of the living God. They shall not be proud, and passionate, and froward as men ; but meek, and lowly, as the Son of God was. They shall not be vain and worldly, and hard-hearted as men are, but regardless of the World, and Holy, and full of Love, and loveliness, as the Son of God was. They shall plainly appear to be redeemed from among men. For,

Sixthly, They are the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. They that shall be thus extraordinarily, and beyond what men have yet been, for these fifteen hundred years, enabled to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, they shall be the first fruits unto God, and unto the Lamb ; appearing very beautiful and lovely in Holiness ; and their Righteousness shall go forth as brightness, according to the Prophet *Isaiah's* Word ; great Splendor and Glory shall appear in them, worshipping the Lord in the Beauties of Holiness. And as the first Fruits come before the full Harvest ; so is the time a coming,

Ma. 35. 8.

I sa. 62. 1.

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coming, and is also near at hand, wherein these first Fruits unto God, and unto the Lamb shall appear, which shall be a certain evidence of a Glorious Harvest presently following, of a Happy, a Pure, and blessed State of the Church of Christ on Earth; for as the first Fruits shall be Holy, so the Lump shall be also Holy, and Pure, and without fault. For,

Seventhly, In their mouth was found no guile. There shall be no Hypocrisis, no Cheat, no double-tonguedness, no Promise-breaking, no Engagement, Oath, or Covenant-breaking, no Guile found in their mouths. They shall be all thorowly principled in this Maxime, That Truth, and Plain-heartedness will never bring any to shame; but Lies, and Deceit, and Guile will bring shame, and dishonour, and distress upon those that are exercised in them. But in their mouths no kind of dissimulation, or deceit, or guile shall ever be found. For,

Eightly, They are (said to be) without fault before the Throne of God, and of the Lamb. It will appear that they shall be very Holy, and very Pure indeed, when they shall so walk, as they shall be found in their mouths. They before the Throne of God and of the Lamb. Men may have many faults, and yet not be found faulty before the Thrones of Earthly Kings, or Potentates; because they cannot search the Hearts, and try the Reins: Men can but judge according to outward appearance, and according to the sight of the Eye, and the hearing of the Ear. But if these shall be found to be without fault before the Throne of God, and of the Lamb; then they shall not only be blameless, and pure in all their outward Conversation, and Actions, that are visible to the eyes of men, but also in all their most secret Actions, in all the inward motions, and working of their hearts, in all the aims, ends, and bent of their whole Souls, they shall be Holy. They shall be, as it is said of the Kings Daughter, *All-glorious within, and her cloathing of wrought gold.*

Psal. 45
13.

Ninthly, The Lambs Followers, *Rev. 17. 14.* are said to be Called, and Chosen, and Faithful. By which it is plain that they are not as the common sort of People are, but shall be persons that shall be called out from among others; and were also chosen and elected unto that Honour and Dignity, to be the Lambs Followers. And it is also clear, that they shall be truly faithful unto him, and to his Service and Interest. They shall never be unfaithful unto him; none of them shall ever be as *Judas*, to betray their Master, or any part of his interest, for the obtaining of pieces of Silver, or bags of Gold, or Estates of five hundred, or a thousand, or ten thousand *per annum*; but shall be so faithful, as to deny themselves all their worldly interest, and their very lives also, rather than betray any part of their Lords Interest; They are Called, and Chosen, and Faithful.

And the seven Angels that are said to come out of the Temple, *Rev. 15.* are said to be clothed in pure and white Linnen, having their Breasts girded with golden Girdles; which signifieth very great purity and integrity, and the beauty of Holiness appearing in them.

The like is said of those Followers of the Lamb, that are mentioned *Rev. 19. 14.* And the like we have express, *Psal. 101.* being a Prophecie speaking in the Person of Christ, of what he will do in the latter-day-dispensation, when no unclean person shall be in *Sion*, in these words, *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes; I hate the works of them that turn aside, it shall not cleave*

to me; a froward heart shall depart from me; I will not know a wicked person. Who so privily slandereth his Neighbour, him will I cut off: Him that hath a high look, and a proud heart, will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me. He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me; he that worketh deceit, shall not dwell within my House. He that telleth lies, shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the Land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the City of the Lord.

The like Description is also given in the fifteenth and twenty fourth *Psalms*, where the question being put, Who shall dwell in the Lords Holy Hill: It is answered, *Psal. 15.* He that walketh uprightly, and worketh Righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that back biteth not with his Tongue, nor doth evil to his Neighbour; nor taketh up a reproach against his Neighbour: in whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord: He that sweareth to his own hurt, and chargeth not; he that putteth not out his money to Usury, nor taketh a Reward against the innocent. And *Psal. 24.* He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his Soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. And *Isa. 33. 15, 16.* It is said, I hat that man that shall dwell on high, and that shall see the King in his beauty, and whose eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet Habitation, that he shall be a man that walketh Righteously, and speaketh uprightly; and that he despiseth the gain of Oppression, and shaketh his hands from holding of Bribes, and stoppeth his Ears from hearing of Blood, and shutteth his Eyes from seeing Evil.

There are also many Scriptures that do give full Testimony to this, that the latter-day-Saints shall have this Inscription written on them, *HOLINESS TO THE LORD.* So that persons that live in a continued course of any of the forementioned Evils, are altogether incapable of dwelling in the Holy Hill, in the House, in the City of the Lord; and of being the Lambs Followers: For he hates the works of them that turn aside, of back-sliders, of them that have forsaken him, and cleave to other Lovers; or that turn aside and betray his Interest; or that are unrighteous, in neglecting his Worship, and his Ordinances. *Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness,* saith he to *John*, implying that the being obedient unto God in the practise of all his Ordinances and Appointments, (that being then a dispensation and appointment of the Lord, in that season, he having appointed and commissioned his blessed Servant *John*, to Baptize his People *Israel*) is a part of the Righteousness of his People. And he hates unrighteousness, in not keeping his Precepts also, that require Love, Mercy, Meekness, and Lowliness, and Faithfulness. But he saith, That he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me; he shall have that honour and happiness; and, Mine Eyes shall be upon the Faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me. And, He that speaketh the truth in his heart; and he that is of such a tender heart, and gracious Spirit, as he will not back-bite his Neighbour, will not speak evil of him behind his back, nor hear evil to be spoken of him; will not take up a reproach against him, nor will swear deceitfully, but will keep his Oath, though it be to his own hurt and prejudice; such a man shall dwell in his Holy Hill. But a wicked person he will not know; he that is of a froward heart shall depart from him, and

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he that slandereth his Neighbour, he will cut off; and him that hath a high look, and a proud heart, he will not suffer. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within his house, nor him that telleth lies. But he will early destroy all the wicked of the Land, and cut off all wicked doers from the City of the Lord:

How greatly therefore doth it concern all the Lords People, to fear and tremble at the thoughts of living in those sins, of which many of them are declared to be guilty; or in any others of which they may know themselves to be guilty?

Now then, it is clear from these several Scriptures, that these Blessed Ones, that shall be near the Lamb, and shall follow him whithersoever he goeth, shall be a People that shall hate Covetousness; they shall be a chaste Spouse unto him, they shall be perfectly free from Harlotry. No Beloved shall have their hearts but their Lord; and though it may be some of them have been Idolaters, yet when they are convinced of the abominableness of this Evil, they shall with a holy indignation cast away their Idols of Silver, and their Idols of Gold, which they have made each one for themselves, unto the Moles, and the Bats, they shall hate the thoughts of their Idolatry and Harlotry. They shall be grieved to look upon their Bags of Money, and their great Stocks in Trading, and Merchandizing; when they cast up the sum of them, and of their Lands, and Houses, and Rents which they have purchased, and hoarded up with delight. And that which was their greatest delight, shall be their greatest burthen; and it shall grieve their Souls, and cut them to the heart, to think how hard-hearted they were, in laying up all this, and suffering many dear Servants of their Lord to want, when they knew it, and were told of it, and yet had not hearts to relieve them; and they shall be so grieved, and so humbled, and so reformed herein, as it shall be most apparent; that though they were defiled with the love of the World, and that Harlot had stolen away their hearts; now it shall be so no more. Now, none but Christ, none but Christ is the delight of their Souls; and the World shall be trampled under their feet. They shall despise it, and all the offers of it, when it comes in competition with the service of their Lord, whose Worship and Service, in private and in publick, in Closets, and Families, and Churches; and in the world, if they call them to any service there, shall be their meat, and drink, their joy, their delight, their Heaven upon Earth.

1/a. 2. 201

Thus there will be a blessed freedom from that Sin of Covetousness; and not from that sin only, but from all other Evils also.

Now how greatly doth it concern all the Lords People, to fear and tremble at the thoughts of living in those sins, of which many of them are declared to be guilty, or in any others of which they know themselves to be guilty? But if ye love to be near the King, to dwell within his House, to be of the City of the Lord, to see the King in his Beauty, to have the honour to serve him; Be ye sure to wash and make clean, and to put away all the evil of your doings from before his Eyes; Lest he be angry and ye perish; lest he destroy you as the wicked of the Land, and cut you off from the City of the Lord. But remember this one Word of his, *He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.*

III.
Consideration.

III. Another great Consideration that I would lay before the Lords People, to provoke them to a deep Humiliation, and a thorow Reformation, is this, That as without it their most solemn Services cannot have acceptance with their God, and as without it they cannot be the Lambs Followers, nor be admitted into his Holy Habitation, into his House, and Blessed Presence; So neither without it shall they be so much as shewn the way into it, or be instructed in the Path in which they ought to walk in his House and City, which yet is much hid from them. But if they be truly and unfeignedly humbled, truly penitent, and truly ashamed of all that they have done; then it may please the Lord to lend forth such a Prophet or Prophets, as may be enabled in plainness, and demonstration of the Spirit and Power; so as it cannot be denied, to shew them such a Pattern of the House of the Lord, as whereby they may all serve the Lord with one Shoulder, one Mind, and one Heart; and then Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim any more;

For thus the Lord expresses himself by his Prophet Ezekiel, Chap: 43-10, 11, 12. *Thou Son of Man, shew the House to the House of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the Pattern of the House; and if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the House, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the Forms thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and all the Forms thereof, and all the Laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole Form thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and do them. This is the Law of the House; upon the top of the Mountain, the whole limit thereof round about, shall be most Holy: Behold, this is the Law of the House.*

Now if the House of Israel, from the consideration of the greatness of their iniquities, which have been shewed to them, (and of their lamentable unreasonableness to what the Lambs Followers shall be, and to what some few particular Followers of the Lamb now are, and some few of them have been in all Ages; and of their unfitness to dwell in the House of the King, in the City of the Lord) shall be ashamed of their iniquity; then may they obtain the favour to be shewed to the full, all the Forms of the Lords House, and the Fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof; and all the Forms thereof, and the Ordinances thereof, and all the Laws thereof; even of that House upon the top of the Mountain, the whole Limit whereof, round about, shall be most Holy; even of that House which hath this Name, **THE LORD IS THERE.**

IV.
Consideration.

IV. Another great and weighty Consideration, to provoke the Lords People thorowly to amend their Wayes, and thorowly to walk in the Paths of Holiness, is this, That they do by their Iniquities, not onely make themselves incapable of being accepted of God, in the performances of their most solemn Duties; and incapable of being the Lambs Followers, and incapable of being shewed the perfect Pattern of his House; in all which they do very greatly wrong themselves; but they do also (which is more than all that) greatly prophane and pollute the Name of the Lord their God; as appears, Ezek. 36-22, 23. *Therefore say unto the House of Israel, Thus saith the*

the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O House of Israel, but for my holy Names sake, which ye have prophaned among the Heathen whither ye went; and I will sanctifie my great Name, which was prophaned among the Heathen, which ye prophaned in the midst of them. And Ver. 17. it is said, When the House of Israel dwelled in their own Land, they defiled it by their own way, and by their doings; their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed Woman. The sinful and unclean wayes of this People, defiled and prophaned the Name of the Lord; and not onely so, but defiled their own Land when they dwelt in it.

The House of *Israel* do prophane the Name of the Lord by the sinfulness of their wayes, more then others do by their abominations; for the House of *Israel* are nearer unto God, and are more under his teachings then others, having his Oracles committed unto them; and they profess to be a People near unto him, but others do not; and they pass in the World for a People that have chosen the Lord, for their Lord, and their God. Now when these do break his Law, and behave themselves like the Heathen, and when their Conversation is sinful. They do greatly dishonour their Lord, when they are as the men of this World are. When as the men of the World, that have their portion in this World, and have no better thing to set their hearts upon, having no interest in God, nor Christ, nor having any assurance of that inheritance uncorruptible, and undefiled, and that faileth not away, that is reserved in Heaven for Saints; As these are Covetous, so are they that profess to be the Lords People; as these do spend the greatest part of their time, and strength, and abilities, to get wealth, though they have no necessity so to do, (for they that have but from hand to mouth, and must work for Bread before they can have it, have a necessity to spend most of their time so) so do many of those that profess to be the Lords People. Again, as these are close-fisted, and hard-hearted, and have not bowels of compassion unto their Brethren, so it is with them; as they are negligent, and remiss in that which they account to be the Worship and Service of the Lord, though some of them are zealous of it in their way, so are many of the Lords People; and as these are Proud, and Passionate, and Covenant-breakers, and spend much time in prating of needless things when they come together, and take no care to remember the Word when they hear it; so it is with many of them that profess to be the People of the Lord. Now when the Lords People do thus, then they do greatly prophane, and pollute, and wound, and reproach the Name of the Lord.

For if there be a man that is a discreet man, that is a good and a just man, and a man of port in the World, if he have under Servants in his Family, that are Idle, Drunken, Sortish Persons, that are Whoremongers, and Swearers, which things he hates: If such be in his Family, Are they not a dishonour and a reproach unto him? But it would be more a reproach unto him, if those Servants that were near his Person were such; but much more would it be a dishonour to him, if his Children were so; and much more would it be a shame, and a blot, and a dishonour to him, if the Wife of his Bosom should turn a Strumpet, a lewd Person, a Drunkard, a Sor.

So is it with respect unto the most High. Those that are in the nearest Relation to him, are the greatest dishonour to him, and do most of all blot, and

and wound, and reproach his Holy Name; if their Conversations be irregular, uncomely, unworthy of bearing his Name. And the nearer persons are to him, the greater reproach do they bring unto his Holy Name. They that are Professors at large, and profess to be his Servants, though far off from him, do by their sinful wayes dishonour him more then others; but they that seem to be Servants that are nearer to him, being very sinful, dishonour him more; but they that pretend to be in a higher state, and call themselves his Children, and call him Father; These by their iniquities dishonour him much more. But that those are yet nearer, and are accounted Gospel-Churches, which the Scripture stiles, and which, if truly constituted, are indeed the very Spouse, the very Bride of the Lord Jesus; for these to play the Hailot, and embrace other Lovers, for these to be drunken with the cares of this Life; for these to be drunk with passion, and forwardness of Spirit; for these to be proud, and haughty, which vice he hates; for these to be wretched, perfidious, Covenant-breakers, which God and man abhors; for these to be hard-hearted, stony-hearted Creatures; and to be regardless of holy Duties, which they should be more diligent in then any; for these to be regardless of his Counsels, and Love-Letters, and not to meditate on his Word, as if it were not worthy to be regarded, is the highest reproach, and dishonour, and the greatest grief, and wounding to him, that can be imagined.

O what cuts and gashes, to speak after the manner of men, do these make in the very heart of Christ? O what a dishonour are these to him? What a blot and reproach do they bring upon his most Glorious, and most Holy Name?

Ezek. 36.
23.

Therefore saith the Lord by Ezekiel, *I will sanctifie my great Name, which was prophaned among the Heathens, which ye (the House of Israel) prophaned in the midst of them.*

John 15.
8.

And on the other hand, when the Lords People do walk in all his Laws and Ordinances blamelessly; when they cannot be blamed for Covetousness, nor Pride, nor any other Evil, but they do in all things observe the blessed Commandments of the Lord Jesus; Then saith our Lord Jesus, Men may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven, *Mat. 5. 16.* And herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit. So that it is undeniable, that the good Works, the Holy and Heavenly Conversations of his People, do glorifie the Lord; are to his Praise, and to his Honour: and that the sinfulnesses of their Conversations, are a great dishonour, reproach, and blot unto his great Name. And therefore Nathan tells David, That he by his sinfulness in the matter of Uriah had caused the Enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. And the Apostle James, speaking of some that were rich, that did despise the poor; having the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of Persons, (respecting the Man in rich Array, more then a man in mean Apparel,) sayes thus, *Jam. 2. 7* Do not they Blaspheme that worthy Name by which ye are called?

And that the unrighteousness of Saints do greatly prophane, and dishonour that worthy Name by which they are called appears thus. To instance but in one particular Evil of theirs, viz. That sin of Covetousness. When they that are the Lords People, who profess that he is their Portion, are as eager in seeking for themselves and theirs, the things of this World (though they

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they therein break many of his blessed Precepts and Instructions, and neglect many Duties) as any others; as if they would give the World thereby to understand, that there is no such satisfaction in the Lord for their Souls, as is declared; as if there were more sweetness in the World, then in Him: as if that were an untrue Character of him that the Spouse gives, *Cant. 5. from 9. to 18. verse.* As if *Habakkuk* had not reason to say, *Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall Fruit be in the Vines: The labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yeeld no Meate: The Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and the Herd shall be cut off from the Stalls. Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* As if that were not fit to be said that *David* sayes, *Psal. 73. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire beside thee.*

I say, when they that are the Lords People do this; How horribly do they herein reproach their Lord, and wound and prophane his most holy Name! The like may be said of all, or of any of the other Evils, that any of them are guilty of. And such as continue in these, or any of those Evils, will not be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of *Jesus Christ.* 1 Pet. 1.7

But happy are they that so walk, as that God in all things may be glorified by them, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. Happy are they that so use the Worl'd, so labour for things convenient for their Families; so eat and drink, and enjoy all outward Comforts, as onely to fit them for the Service of their Lord and King; and are not Servants to the World, or any thing that they enjoy, but the Servants of their God only, that, Whether they eat, or drink, or whatsoever they do, do all to the Glory of God, and do not dishonour him in their seeking after earthly things; nor in eating or drinking, or in enjoying any Creature-Comfort, but have their moderation so to all those things, as it shall appear to all men, that God is the great delight and joy of their Souls, and none of these things do steal their hearts from, or weaken their affections to him. Happy are they that are so overcome by the Mercies of God, as they present their Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service. And happy are those that so walk in all things, that God may have glory in them, and they may indeed be the glory of *Christ.* 1 Cor. 10. 31.

But O how few are of this Stamp! and what great reason have we to pray, and say, Our Father which art in Heaven, sanctified be thy great Name.

And oh that the consideration of this, how greatly the Lords People have prophaned, and do prophane his holy Name, might be so deeply fixed on all their hearts; as that they might be greatly drawn to look on his precious Name which they have prophaned, dishonoured, wounded, and reproached; and mourn, and be in great bitterness, as one mourneth and is in bitterness for his only Son, or for his First-born. Zach. 12.

There might be several other Considerations added to these, as inducements to the Lords People, to induce and provoke them to that thorough-amending their wayes, and turning to the Lord, from all their Evils, with their whole heart, and cleaving to him with full purpose of heart; but these four are of so great weight and force, as if these prevail not, twenty more may not. But through the Lords Blessing these may be thoroughly effectual, to that blessed, desired, and longed-for end. 10.

Now from the whole Premises, these following Positions may be clearly laid down.

I.
Position
Mat. 3.
11.
First, That those Professors of the fear of the Lord, that have been so polluted, as is declared, and that do continue in those Evils, whether of Commission or Omission, are very unworthy, and very unmeet, to be accounted Members of his House; and though they may be at present Members of several Congregations, yet they are such as shall be cut off from the City of the Lord, if they repent not; when he shall come thoro'ly to purge his Floor, and gather his Wheat into his Garner.

II.
Position
† For
some Officers may
be as guilty of these
Evils as
others.
Secondly, That is the great duty of those that are gifted, and gracious spirited men, and men that have obtained mercy to be faithfull, that are in the several Congregations and Societies of them that profess the fear of the Lord; whether they are Officers among them, or † any others that are so qualified, to do these three things.

First, To promote and press with all earnestness, and fervency of Spirit, the work of unfeigned Humiliation before the Lord, and of true Repentance for all, or any of these Evils that are found among any of them all, yea to be lying at the Feet of the Lord continually, and to give him no rest, until he pour out such a portion of his Spirit upon them, as may truly enable them to be ashamed of all the Evils they have done, and to loath themselves in Truth for all their abominations; I say, To give the Lord no rest, until he do these things for them: and not to content themselves with keeping a day of Fasting, and to think when that is done all is well, but to be importunate seekers of the Lord, for such a truly broken, and penitent Spirit, as God will not despise; that they may be truly (as it is said, Ezek. 7. 16. of them that shall escape from the Sword without, and the Pestilence and Famine within) like Doves of the Valleys, all of them mourning every one for his Iniquity; even for his and her particular Iniquity, most especially; and also for all the abominations of others also, that they may have that special Mark, chap. 9. 4.

II.
Duty.
And, Secondly, It is the Duty also of such faithful Servants of the Lord, in the several Congregations, to declare unto the Members of each Society, that are guilty of such Evils, and live in them, That they ought not to be admitted to be partakers of the great Ordinance of the Lords Supper, unless they repent, so as to reform, and thoro'ly amend their ways; it being a very dangerous thing to approach to the Table of the Lord, in these pollutions and deformities, and not having on their beautiful Garments, viz. The Royal Robes of Righteousness, the Blessed Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit; and the precious cloathing of Humility, even all those white Robes, and Golden Girdles, and Cloathings of Wrought Gold, that do signify all the Fruits, and gracious Operations of the Holy Spirit. And that it is dangerous, appears 1 Cor. 11. 26, 27. to 30. For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew forth the Lords Death until he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lords Body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many are fallen asleep. Where it is clear, that it is a very dangerous

Isa. 51. 10

1 Pet. 3. 4

1 Pet. 5. 5

Rev. 15.

Psal. 45.

dangerous thing for a man to draw near to the Table of the Lord, without examination of himself, whether there be any iniquity that he lives in, whether he be a Vessel on whom holiness to the Lord is visibly written or not. It is very dangerous to rush unto the Table of the Lord, without any fear or dread of coming unworthily; not considering that such as have so done, are guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord; and that such as have so done, have for this cause been sick, and weak, and have fallen asleep. And it is most certain, That

It is a dangerous thing to come to that Table without the Spirit of Love, that engages the Soul to true and unfeigned love to all Saints, as Members of the same Body, so as to communicate freely, and liberally (as God hath blessed) as to Members of our own Body, nor like a Churl.

It is a dangerous thing to come to that Table with hearts full of Adultery, Mystical Adultery, hearts given up unto other Lovers, and not to the Lord.

It is dangerous coming to that Table with froward hearts, contentious spirits, having any heart rising against any person, or persons. Or which is somewhat less;

It is a dangerous thing to come to that Table, with slighings of any others that are members of Christ as truly as we: for the Corinthians coming together, and some having a fulness of outward things, did eat and drink when others that were poor in this world had not, and were hungry. The Apostle calls these Actions in them that we call, a despising of the Church of God, (the poor Members, as truly making up the Church of God as those that were rich) and a shaming of them that have not. The poorer sort, it may be seeing their fulness, having their Bottles of Wine, and costly Cakes, and dainty Viands, being made ashamed that had it not. Now their thus slighting the poor, (which Evil, James also reproveth, as hath been shewed;) and shaming of them in that particular, is the sin the Apostle here reproveth, and advices them rather to eat and drink in their own Houses, then to grieve and shame the Poor; and not to slight the Poor, but to carry one for another; for sayes he, *verses 20, 21.* When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lords Supper; for in eating every one taketh before another his own Supper, and one is hungry, and another is drunken, (that is, Hath drunk sufficiently, and fed sufficiently.) And *vers. 33, 34.* Wherefore my Brethren, when ye come together to eat, carry one for another; and if any man hunger, let him eat at Home, *that ye come not together unto condemnation.*

*They it
may be
would
carry for
the rich.*

It is a dangerous thing to come to that Table with a proud Heart, *Psal. 101. 5.* Him that hath an high look, and a proud heart, will not I suffer. Such shall not be welcome to his Table.

In a word, He that is guilty of, and continueth in any Evil, whether of Omission, or Commission, whether of the Evils that have been declared to be the Sins of the House of Jacob, or whether of any other Evil whatsoever that he is convinced of, if he be not truly penitent, and have not truly forsaken those Evils, It is a very dangerous thing for such a one to approach to the Table of the Lord; such do eat that Bread, and drink that Cup of the Lord unworthily; and do come together unto condemnation. And the Lord will condemn them for it, unless they speedily repent, and judge themselves, and condemn themselves, that they may not be judged.

But O how unpreparedly, and unworthily have many, without examination, or consideration of the greatness of the undertaking, rushed unto the Table of the Lord without the Wedding Garment? and how seldom have some Administrators of that Ordinance given warning unto their Hearers of the danger of it, and Preached preparation (Sermons or) Words, which they ought to have done, as they tendered the safety or welfare of their Souls?

The Lord hath been greatly provoked to anger for the Sins of the House of Jacob; and shall such sinners still be permitted to come to the Table of the Lord without repentance?

III.
Duty.

Thirdly, It is also the Duty of every such faithful Servants of the Lord in the several Congregations, to declare distinctly, and particularly, to every person that desires to be joyned to any Church of Christ hereafter, that they may not be admitted into that Holy Fellowship, if they be guilty of, or do live in any of these Evils, or any other known Sin; and that hereafter, if any of them be found in any Evil, they must expect to be cast out from among them.

Ezek. 7.
11.

For one great Reason why Sin hath so abounded among the Professors of the fear of the Lord, is the unfaithfulness of the generality of the Churches unto the Lord, in not exercising his Ordinances, and Appointments faithfully; but suffering sins one upon another, and not shewing that true love, and true friendship one towards another, to reprove one another faithfully, and graciously, and meekly, according to the Gospel-Rule, (and the Rule of the Law also) for restoring such as are overtaken in faults; But their suffering sinners to go on in sin, (in those Sins declared to be their sins) and to grow old in Sin, and hardened in Sin; So that now it is a hard work for them to break off their Sins by Righteousness, and their hard-hearted iniquities, by shewing mercy to the Poor. (Dan. 4. 27.) Who whereas, had the Ordinances of Christ been faithfully, and frequently, and duly practised, whensoever there was occasion, Sin might have been nipt in the Bud, and never have risen up to such a Rod of Wickedness as it hath done. If Covetousness had been curbed betimes, it would not have grown up to that monstrousness that now it is in many Church-Members. And if hardness of heart, and close-fistedness, had been faithfully reprov'd, it would have been more a shame to be so. If the odiousness of Pride and self-conceitedness had been faithfully laid open in the Spirit of meekness and love, to those in whom at any time it appeared, it might have greatly prevented the continuance of it. If forwardness of Spirit had been faithfully declared against as an Evil very unbecoming Saints, and an Evil wherein they are most unlike their Lord, (who was meek and lowly in heart, and as a Lamb dumb before the Shearers, he opened not his mouth,) and therefore not to be tolerated in any that is a Member in a Church of Christ; it might greatly restrain, and mortifie that detestable Evil. So also if neglects of holy Duties had been declared against as not fit to be suffered in any Member of a Church of Christ, it would have been both a shame and a grief of heart to any person to neglect Duties, that ought to be duly and constantly performed; whereas now Duties are neglected without shame, or blushing, or true grief of heart. So also if Covenant-breaking had been reprov'd in any one Church-Member, and declared against as an Evil abhor'd

Of God, and of his People; and that it was not fit that any such person should remain a Member of a Church of Christ without true repentance; I say, if this Rule had been put in use in the Churches of Christ, when, first, any Member of any Church appeared to be guilty of it, as many were fifteen years ago and more, it might have prevented many others, and have caused them that were so dealt with (*viz.* orderly reprov'd for that Evil, and if impenitent, cast out as grievous sinners, and not worthy to remain in the House of the Lord) to have considered their wayes, and to have been truly humbled and penitent long ago. But they being suffered to remain in a Church of Christ impenitent, under the first Evil of that kind, they were left to hardness of heart, and sear'dness of Conscience in that and many other Evils; making no bones of breaking Oaths and solemn Engagements in every particular part of them; and left to such other Evils as they would have abhor'd the very thoughts of them, if they had been told but three years before, that within a few years they should be very grievous sinners against the Lord, in such and such sorts of Sin, and to such and such high degrees. And they would have said as *Hazael* said to *Elisha*, Is thy Servant a Dog, that he should do this great thing? But being suffered to remain in Churches impenitent, in the first breach of Covenant, they were so hardened, as they justified themselves in that and other grievous iniquities, and saw no Evil in them; neither were penitent in the sense of them, until the judgements of God came in like a deluge upon them: and though the judgements of God are come, they do not at all repent, nor give him glory, nor sanctifie his Name, in saying, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy Judgements.* Though his judgements are come upon us for this very end, that he may sanctifie his great Name, which hath been polluted by his People among the Heathen, among the unbelieving Nations about us, and among the unbelievers in these three Nations.

I say, they do not repent of, nor turn from their Evil, nor glorifie, and sanctifie the Name of the Lord, in declaring that he is just when he speaketh, and clear when he judgeth: It is true, they will confess in general that they are sinners; and so will the worst of men. But where is the acknowledging of particular Evils in the Publick Congregations; and taking shame for them before all in the great Assemblies? that God may be glorified, and the declaring a detestation of them, and the publick manifestation of the turning from them; that the Name of the Lord may be Hallowed, Sanctified, and Glorified: for he is not a God that hath pleasure in Wickedness, neither shall Evil dwell with him. And, *The Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness; his Countenance doth behold the upright.* And if such as are accounted his People, do wickedly, and do not walk in the Wayes of Righteousness, and delight to do the Will of God, and fulfill all Righteousness, in all things to do his Will, but turn aside into crooked Paths, he will have no pleasure in them; but he will bring his Judgements sooner upon them then upon others, until they sanctifie his Name, by humbling themselves before him, and by turning from all their Evils, and by walking in the Paths of Holiness. But, I say, had the Rule of our Lord and King been observed, towards many, on their first fall in breaking the Covenant they had solemnly taken, how many Evils might it have prevented? But again, had there been at first a faithful reprov'ing of a Spirit of bitterness, and heart-rising against any

1 Tim. 4.
2.

Ps. 119.
137.

Psal. 53.
4.

Psal. 54.
11. 7.

Ps. 40. 8.
Mat. 3. 12

any that were Saints, for their differing in judgement in some particular things, and a following the Rule unto a casting such out of Churches, as nourished heart-ribsings against any that were Saints, because they were not of the same mind with us, this Evil might have been banished from among Saints. And if care had been taken to have admonished, and reprov'd such as neglected to Chew the Cud, viz. to call the Word to mind after they had heard it; this profitable exercise would have been more constantly, and more conscionably practised among Saints. And if the Members of Churches had taken inspection into such as spend time unprofitably together, when it might be spent to more edification; it might have been a more constant practice among Saints to study, that when they come together, their discourses may be such as may minister Grace to the Hearers.

But all the House of *Israel* must know assuredly, that the Lord their God expects a thorow Reformation henceforward, in this and all other things which concern the glorifying, and sanctifying his great Name. All wicked doers must be cut off from the City of the Lord. No particular person that is a wicked doer in any of these respects, continuing and living in these Evils, or any other Sin against knowledge, may be received into the House of the Lord. Or if any that were reformed, and then received into the House of the Lord, do back-slide and relaps into Evil again; they must be cut off from that holy place; every vessel therein must be holiness to the Lord.

III. Position

Rev. 2.
23.

The third Position that is to be laid down from the Premises, is this; That if (as in the first Position) there be not a speedy Humiliation; And if (as in the second) there be not a speedy discharge of those several Duties, by them who are best fitted for them, and by all others as Assistants of them therein, according to their several capacities; the Lord our God, and our Holy Righteous Father, may be speedily provoked to remove the Candlesticks from the Churches in London, and in all *England*. (not to say any thing of Churches elsewhere) For the Church of *Ephesus*, we find to be greatly commended for many things, in these words; *I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and thy Patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; And thou hast tried them that say they are Apostles and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast born, and hast patience, and for my Names-sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.* In which words we have many excellent Characters given of this Church. As,

First, They were Labourers, and laboured in good Works. They were not idle Drones in the Church of Christ, but they laboured in the Lords Work and Service; and though they might suffer Persecutions, and mockings for their so doing, yet they had patience to indure it all for the Lords-sake. And,

Secondly, They had such a Spirit of Zeal for the Lord, and for the Holiness that became his House, as they could not bear them which were Evil, but would search it out, and discover it, and prosecute Evil doers according to the Rules of Christ. And,

Thirdly, They tried them which said they were Apostles and were not, and found them Liars; which is their great commendation, that they would not suffer any persons to impose upon them, with the authority of Apostles, which were not appointed by God thereunto, but were found Liars. And,

Fourthly,

Fourthly, It is said, They had born the Yoak of Christ, and continued patient; and as it is said, They laboured, so it is said, They had not fainted; which is their great commendation.

And though they had all these blessed qualifications, yet the Lord thus expresses himself, *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love; remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent; and do thy first Works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

And if the Lord said thus to this Church of *Ephesus*, that had so many worthy things in them, because they had lost their first Love; that is, lost the heat and fervency of Love, which they first had to him, and to his ways; How much more may he say thus to many Churches now, who come much short of the good that was in them; and it may be, have much more lost their first Love; who have forsaken their first Husband, and entertained other Lovers into their Bosoms: whose coldness of Love is notoriously manifest to Men and Angels, and whose extravagancies are many and great? How can they expect any thing less, but that that Sentence should be pronounced against them, *I will come unto (such and such a Church) (see quickly, and remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent).*

O that therefore all the Churches in *England* may remember from whence they are fallen, and may repent.

The Conclusion of the whole Discourse.

NOW for a Conclusion of this Discourse, That all the House of *Israel* may be encouraged to repent and return to the Lord, even every particular Person; as well those that are not Members of Particular Churches, as those that are; I have this further Message to declare unto them all that fear the Lord, viz.

That there is hope in Israel concerning this thing; which is grounded upon the word of truth, in these following Scriptures. Isa. 5. 17. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him; I hid me, and was wroth and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and I will heal him. I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heale him: but the wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt, there is no peace, saith my God to the wicked. Ex 14. 16

In which portion of the precious Scriptures of Truth, the Spirit of the Lord takes special notice, of that which is the great, the grand Sin of the Professors of the fear of the Lord in this Age, which of all their Evils is the most abominable, though they are all hateful to the Lord. And what is said in this Scripture, is for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come. And the Lord here speaks of a People that were for this Sin of Covetousness smitten by him; as his people now have been, and yet they went on

THE CONCLUSION.

on frowardly in the way of their heart, they went on perversly in their covetousness; notwithstanding his rebukes being an unworthy people; as his people now have been of whom it may be said, as he complains of them of old *Isa. 9. 13.* *For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts.* A people that have both abused his favours; and are regardless of his being wroth, and his suitings, and corrections of them: yet notwithstanding their perversness, and unworthyness, is pleased to manifest such riches of grace; as to say, that he had seen the evil of their wayes, and would heal them, and restore comforts, &c. So that the hardest, and most froward, and most rebellious heart, may be softened, and turned, and healed, and then comforted; for here is sufficient ground of Hope for *Israel* in this Case. But there is no ground for any Hope, that while a Soules Diseases, and defilements remain upon it; whether it be Covetousness, or any other Evil, that they shall have any comfort or peace in that state; for there is no Peace, saith my God, to the Wicked; nor to any Soul living in any Wickedness; But they shall be like the troubled Sea, which cannot rest, whose Waters cast up mire and dirt. But to a Soul that is healed of its backsliding, God will Create the fruit of the Lips Peace to it, and will restore comfort to it, and to its Mourners. And God can, and will heal them that have been, and are guilty of the Iniquity of Covetousness; and have, notwithstanding they have been smitten by him for it, yet gone on forwardly in the way of their Hearts.

But here is no word of Peace for any but the healed Soul. Some, it may be, that are covetous, will be covetous still; and some that are filthy, will be filthy still; but the most covetous may be so healed, as they may become such as are most hating Covetousness; and God will heal such as have gone on frowardly in the way of their hearts; and he will then speake Peace unto them.

Another Scripture to this purpose also is *Jer. 31. 18, 19, 20.* *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus. Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh, I was ashamed, ye even confounded, because I did bear the reproch of my youth Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant Child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him. I will surely have mercy on him saith the Lord.*

In which Scripture we find that Ephraim had bin chastised; as the Lords people have now been for sin; but Ephraim was froward, and untoward under it, and behaved himself like a Bullock not accustomed to the Yoke, and could not submit to the Lords chastisements. And yet notwithstanding Ephraim is brought at last to bemoan himself, that ever he should be so froward, and so unmortified, and unsubmitive to the Lords Righteous Chastisements. And at last Ephraim is brought to pray, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.* As if he should say thus, Thou knowest how insufficient I am to turn my self. O turn thou me, for thou art all-sufficient, for thou art the Lord my God. It is a work that thou canst easily do in me; For thou who art the Lord our God, workest all our Works in us, and for us.

And then Ephraim is become very teachable, and very gentle, and very ready

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ready to bear the Lords Yoak ; and Ephraim is turned, and repenteth, and is instructed, and smites upon his thigh, and is ashamed ; yea even confounded, because he did bear the reproach of his Youth. And thus, when Ephraim is brought into this humble and gracious posture ; then the Lord speaks Peace unto him, and manifests the yearning of his Bowels towards him, and promises that he will have mercy on him. Ephraim being healed, being turned, the Lord soon creates the Fruit of the Lips Peace to him.

The like Scripture we have also, *Hos. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, and say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously ; so will we render thee the Calves of our Lips, Ashur shall not save us, we will ride no more upon Horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, *Yea are our Gods ;* for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will heal their back-slidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel ; he shall grow as the Lillies, and cast forth his Roots as Lebanon.

In which Scripture we have a back-sliding People encouraged to return to the Lord ; and a promise that the Lord will heal their back-slidings. Though they have lost their first Love, and back-sliden from the Lord, and have forsaken him in a great measure, and his blessed Rules of Love, and Humility, and Meekness, and Righteousness, &c. Yet he will heal their back-slidings, and love them freely. And then when they are healed, and do take unto them words, &c. And not until then doth the Lord speak Peace unto them, and declare his anger to be turned away ; and promise to be as the dew unto Israel : And he shall cast forth his Roots as Lebanon.

There are several other Scriptures that confirm this great and blessed Truth ; but I shall mention but one more, with which I shall conclude this Work and service for the Lord, and for his People ; humbly praying that the great and precious blessings therein mentioned, as also in the fore-mentioned Scriptures, may speedily be the portion of all the Lords People ; It is, *Jeremiah 33. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.* Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, concerning the houses of this City, and concerning the houses of the Kings of Judah, which are thrown down by the Mounts, and by the Sword. They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in my anger, and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this City. Behold, I will bring it Health and Cure, and I will cure them, and I will reveal unto them the abundance of Peace and Truth. And I will cause the Captivity of Judah, and the Captivity of Israel to return, and will build them as at the first ; And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me. And it shall be unto me a Name of Joy, a Praise, and an Honour before all the Nations of the Earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them. And they shall fear, and tremble, for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it. In which Scripture, we find that the Lords People had sinned, and greatly provoked him. And therefore the Houses of Jerusalem, and the Houses of the Kings of Judah were thrown down by the Mounts, and by the Sword ; and the places were filled with the dead bodies of the men, whom the Lord had slain in his anger, and in his fury ; and for all whose wickedness the Lord had hid his face from that City : which doth manifest, that their sins had been

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very great against the Lord ; and yet notwithstanding, the greatness of their sins doth not hinder, but the Lord who is rich in mercy, and abundant in goodness and truth, graciously promiseth that he will bring it Health, and Cure ; he will heal all their Soul-Diseases, all their Wounds, and Bruises, and purifying Sores, and cure them effectually ; and will cleanse them from all the iniquities whereby they have sinned against him ; and when he hath cleansed, and healed them, then he will reveal unto them the abundance of Peace and Truth. So that it is clear, and unquestionable, that though a People have been great back sliders, and have greatly revolted from the Lord, yet there is hope concerning such. The Lord can heal such, and the Lord will heal such, for he hath promised it ; and when he hath healed, he will speak Peace unto them ; yea he will reveal unto them the abundance of Peace and Truth, and such shall be unto him, *A Name of Joy, a Praise, and an Honour* before all the Nations of the Earth, which shall hear all the good that he will do unto them ; and shall fear and tremble for all the goodness, and all the prosperity that he will procure unto them.

PSAL. 81. from 8, to 16.

Hear, O my People, and I will testify unto thee ; O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me ; There shall no strange God be in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange God. I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt ; open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. But my People would not hearken unto my Voice ; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts ; and they walked in their own Counsels. O that my People had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my wayes. I should soon have subdued their Enemies, and turned my hand against their Adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him ; but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them with the finest of the Wheat, and with Honey out of the Rock should I have satisfied thee.

MAT. 5. 18, 19.

For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

P O S T.

POST-SCRIPT.

THere are two or three things in this preceeding Discourse that may possibly be mistaken and mis-understood by some; to prevent which, I thought good to add this Post-script before it comes forth to publick view.

The first is page 14. in these words, *As to be able to give great Portions to their Daughters; great Estates to their Children.* Which words I do not recal by no means; but as they are exprest with the words that next follow them in the same and in the line following them, they are for just reproof to those covetous Shepherds, those * greedy Dogs that scrape up all that ever they can of this World, and hoard it up covetously and curiously, not communicating freely to the Members of Jesus Christ that are in distress; or if they part with it, do it sparingly and grudgingly, and not of a ready mind. But that I may not be mistaken in the recited words, I must declare that I do by no means condemn those worthy and blessed Preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that have good and plentiful Estates, and that are of a generous and bountiful Spirit, as I know some are; and that do make it manifest that they have the qualifications of Elders of Churches mentioned, 1 Tim. 13. 2. and Tit. 1. 8. and that are inabled both to be liberal and bountiful, and have wherewith to give good Estates to their Children, for they are left at the same liberty therein that all other Servants of the Lord are, that have large Estates, whose duty it is to give largely to his Saints, of what God hath given them; and who may withal give large Estates to their Children, and it cannot be said to be their sin so to do; for it is unquestionably the duty of them that hear the Word, to † communicate so plentifully to them that Preach it, (if they have it not otherwise) that they may have wherewith to do both; and it is the sin of their † Hearers if they do not so do. For ordinarily many that Preach the Gospel, are men of as good Parts and Abilities to mannage a Trade, or Merchandizes, or any Office that may bring in a good Estate for the supplies of their Families, and large supplies also, as any other men that do by such wayes get great Estates in the World. And if by giving up themselves to this

* Isa. 56.
11.

† 1 Cor. 9
from 6, 10
14.

† That
are rich
in this
world.
1 Tim. 6.
17, 18.

Service of the Lord, they are taken off from so doing ; they that consider it not, and administer not to them accordingly, are very disingenious and unworthy people.

Secondly, Another passage in the preceeding Discourse, in which I would not be mistaken, is that though I do not particularly mention any other Oaths, Ingagements, Protestations, Vows or Promises that have been solemnly made, but the Solemn League and Covenant that was entered into about 22 years since ; that yet the breach of any other Oath, Vow, or Covenant, is as much condemned as the breach of that. And wo is me, that I must say it, This Land mourns because of Oaths, of Oaths that have been wickedly and sinfully broken by those that have profest the Fear of the Lord. And I am perswaded that nothing but unfeigned Humiliations, and deep Contritions (of those that have been guilty of this Sin) for this Sin ; or the taking away their lives from the Earth will pacifie the Lords Wrath, or stay his dreadful Judgements from coming down upon these Nations.

Thirdly, Whereas it is said, page 73. *That the Lambs Followers shall be of the disposition of faithful Abraham.* Thereby is ment, That they shall by no means take, when it is offered to them, the Worlds Wealth from any of the World, no more then *Abraham* took of the King of *Sodom*. But yet may the Lord give them some other way, plentifully of these things, as he did to *Abraham* : But the World shall have no cause to say, That their Wealth hath made them rich.

Christian Reader, whoever thou art, thou mayest be assured, (for the Lord knoweth that I speak the Truth, and lie not.)

I. That this whole Work is done in obedience to the Lord, who laid it with a strong hand upon me, though I † pleaded to be exempted from it ; and though to flesh and blood it was a hard task for several Reasons. And,

II. Thou mayest be as well assured also, that this whole work is done in true love to every Soul that is reprov'd therein, whether they be known or unknown to me, for it may reach the Souls of many thousands, whose faces I never saw, and of whose Names, much less Conversations, I never heard. And the God of *Israel* grant his Blessing to it. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

† As Jeremiah pleaded, and not otherwise.
Jer. i. 6.

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